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# 1975!

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and frolics: why 1975 was  
the best year for bikes



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cm m ISSUE NO.336 OCTOBER 2015

PROJECT BIKES THIS MONTH: NIALL MACKENZIE'S YAMAHA RD400F | SUZUKI GSX-R1100L | YAMAHA TX500 | SUZUKI DR600



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**Publisher:** Steve Rose,  
srose@mortons.co.uk

**Contributors:** Mark 'Weeble' Manning,  
Harry Parvin.

**Art Editor:** Justin Blackmore

**Reprographics:** Paul Fincham,  
Jonathan Schofield

**Divisional advertising manager:**  
Martin Freeman  
mfreeman@mortons.co.uk  
Tel: 01507 529538

**Advertising:** Sam Dearie, Lee Buxton  
sdearie@mortons.co.uk,  
lbuxton@mortons.co.uk  
Tel: 01507 524004

**Subscription manager:** Paul Deacon

**Circulation manager:** Steven O'Hara

**Marketing manager:** Charlotte Park

**Publishing director:** Dan Savage

**Commercial director:** Nigel Hole

**Associate director:** Malc Wheeler

**Editorial address:**

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**General enquiries and back issues:**  
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phone helpline@classicmagazines.co.uk  
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**Archivist:** Jane Skayman  
jskayman@mortons.co.uk,  
01507 529423

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people. We also advise readers to seek  
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## Scary Monsters!

Hindsight and rose-tinted glasses are what we thrive on here at CMM.

We love to look back, ride the machines we rode back in the day and bask in their warm glow. But – like having a coffee with an ex – sometimes you realise it's all just best left in the past. I reckon I'd feel that way about riding my first steed: Kawasaki's KMX125, even if it gave me a freedom I'd never experienced before and I loved it (more trail bikes on page 42).

Sometimes it's purely that we've 'moved on'. My first ride on a GPz900R was much-anticipated back in the early 1990s, but as I'd ridden more modern tackle I was left feeling a tad deflated. It doesn't stop me wanting one now though. I remember riding Suzuki's TL1000S when it first arrived on UK shores and

wondered what all the fuss was about. Sure, it was a powerful V-twin, but I'd never had any issues with it. I reckon that was down to my having massive downforce on the front end (I'm no lightweight) and smaller riders were having issues with it slapping like a mad thing. See our Quick Spin to see how things have changed.

One thing that did hit the spot nostalgia-wise was the Pro-Am at the British Grand Prix. Pop to page 50 for the story as we were there, but our own Niall Mackenzie was always well up for a fight and even trimmed down from his diet of frothy coffees and Chunky Kit-Kats to take part. We reckon it out-did the modern crowd on their Grand Prix bikes.

**Bertie Simmonds** editor



### Bertie Simmonds

**Decision time**

bertie@classicmechanics.com

Do I spend money firming-up my soft FireBlade's suspension or simply go on a diet?



### Steve Cooper

**Older/nicer stuff editor**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

Scoop takes us up the back-lanes on a pair of Honda trail bikes that look similar but feel different!



### Andy Westlake

**Munch-man**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

The man from the south-west finds perhaps the only Munch Mammoth in the UK – and rides it. For a bit!



### Joe Dick

**Top snapper**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

Joe's lovely work graces CMM again this month: with a splendid main test on Honda trail-irons.



### Simon Roots

**Quick Spin guest**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

Editor of sister title Fast Bikes, Rootsy explains why he wanted a TL1000S in the 1990s.



### Mark Haycock

**He's wired!**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

As well as doing our Q&A pages, Mark has had to master the wiring on his Yamaha TX500.



### John Woods

**Splendid reader's resto**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

CMM reader reveals the long road to restoration glory with his Yamaha FZR400RR SP.



### Andy Bolas

**Shrewd motorcycle purchaser**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

Not content with buying a lovely Yamaha TRX850, he tells us of the Hornet and sorts his Bandit's sussies!



### James Whitham

**Suzuki X7 restorer**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

The ex BSB champ is back with the latest instalment in his Suzuki X7 restoration.



### John Nutting

**The Master of MIRA**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

Nutters delves back into his archive to reveal why 1975 was such a great year for bikes and biking.



### Niall Mackenzie

**Re-living his youth (again!)**

editorial@classicmechanics.com

He came, he saw and he conquered (again) on a Pro-Am RD250LC Yamaha 32 years on!



### Sam Dearie

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A man with grey hair, wearing a yellow Yamaha racing cap and a yellow polo shirt, is focused on working on a yellow Yamaha motorcycle. He is using a tool on the engine area. The background is dark and out of focus, showing parts of the motorcycle and some equipment. The overall scene is a close-up of the man working on the bike.

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS PHOTO: MORTONS ARCHIVE

# Debut of a King

Here are legends Derek 'Nobby' Clark (left) and Kel Carruthers working on the Yamaha YZR500 (OW-35K.)

The location is San Carlos in Venezuela and it would be an inauspicious start to their 500 campaign as a mechanical issue sidelined rider Kenny Roberts and reigning champ Barry Sheene would win. It wasn't all bad, as Roberts would win the 250 race but would soon concentrate on the 500 title and take it by 10 points from Sheene as the Brit suffered from a mystery virus all year.

Kenny would go on to be a triple world champion, taking the title the following two years too. From then he would continue to be a front-runner, right up until his final season in 1983 when he was beaten at the last round by fellow American Freddie Spencer.

Kenny paved the way for the American invasion of the 1980s, inspired a knee-out hang-off riding style that worked on bikes with lots of power and limited tyre technology and became a Yamaha team owner as well as a manufacturer in his own right. Triple champ as a rider, four-time world champ as a team owner and a visionary who has helped make MotoGP what it is today. **cm**

■ Want to get hold of pictures from Morton's Archive? Then head to: [www.mortonsarchive.com](http://www.mortonsarchive.com)



# 1999 SUZUKI

# TL1000S

Guest writer **Simon Roots** of *Fast Bikes* magazine fame finds an old barnstormer of the past now much muted.

WORDS: SIMON ROOTS PHOTOS: JONNY GAWLER

**O**n the run up to the advent of the Millennium bug, I took advantage of a cheap loan from the bank hoping that the collapse of everything electronic would wipe out any future payments post December 1999.

The original aim was to buy a bad boy of a bike, the most deranged machine to ever escape the captivity of Japan at the time – a Suzuki TL1000S. I loved the concept of the TL, the looks I was in awe of, the half fairing showing off the motor and the bike signing things off with that platypus of a tail unit. Ultimately, I could just picture myself astride this bike pulling massive wheelies away from the lights and leaving big dark lines at the exit of every corner.

And that's why I bought an R6. Ultimately, I'm a head over heart person, and I found a dealer who was offering a spanking new R6 cheap, but since then, I've always hankered after a TL1000S. That's why I was interested to see an absolute minter parked outside JHS Racing. My brain can't quite work out why someone bought this new and then proceeded to do just 2500 miles over the course of the next 10 years, but at least I had the keys for the day – this was going to be good.

Stock cans were a bit of a turn-off as the whimper from the 996cc V-twin motor was somewhat of a surprise. I was expecting shake, rattle and roll to be generated from those big pistons thrusting up and down, but in return for applying some choke and thumbing the starter, I got a timid tickover. With 105bhp at the rear wheel, in pure power terms, time hasn't been kind to the TL (well, perhaps if you're used to new bikes like me) but 100bhp is ample for the highways.

So how does the TL look today? Well, the muted dark blue didn't float my boat in the way the original red one did with its gaudy graphics, but the riding position felt eminently usable. Though the fixtures and fittings looked like relics from a bygone era ➔











to me, the riding position built by swept bars and high clip-ons feels relevant for cornering action. It's different to be on something truly mechanical these days, where your inputs have direct results when applied to the recipient component. My head felt clearer knowing that I was in control of my own destiny, rather than electronics masking any miscreant use (again, it's what we modern bike riders are used to). Though injected, the drive off the throttle from the motor is clean and punchy in the right zone – anywhere from 4000rpm up. It doesn't possess a heavyweight's wallop, but engage the right ratio at the right time and it delivers a hearty thump. The noise gets better with speed too, with the airbox's inhalation and motor's explosions doing their best to mask what little the pipes exhale.

But I'm still to see how this engine could have caused the problems that are so associated with the TL. It didn't feel so outrageous that the chassis couldn't cope. So that meant it was time to coax it. I remember reading so much about the bike's geometry, weight, power and ultimately its radical rotary damper rear suspension that caused the inherent instability on road. The TL-S eases its way through the roads I'm on, and to be honest they're not the challenge of some, but the bike does what a bike does – it brakes, turns and fires out again. I'm in jeans and a jacket, but I could easily get a knee-down if I was properly attired.

Time has been relatively kind to the TL-S here. Okay, so the brakes don't bite hard on the first squeeze and the tyres need plenty of time to warm up before they hark back to their youth and start

gripping, but the action of cornering itself is sweet. It tips in well; not super quick, but quickly enough. It struggles a bit to hustle it through a roundabout, as much an indication of weight and its centre of gravity, but it delivers precisely what it set out to achieve – to be an A and B-road bahn-stormer.

And there's so much potential here. If you get in at the ground floor with something a bit shabby you can spend what you saved in honing the TL-S to something near perfection – new cans lop weight and add power, refreshed suspension delivers more poise and added precision, new lines and pads return the bite to the brakes. There really is life in

**ABOVE:** Still looks good – even in blue.

**BELOW:** Still goes well too.







**IN DETAIL:** 1/ Suzuki damper marks this as a post-launch year model. 2/ Carbon-look scoops looked the biz in '97. 3/ Left-alone spring hides behind lattice ally frame. 4/ Name alone used to scare people. 5/ Suzuki had a thing for seat humps like this in the late 1990s.

## Putting the damper on things

The TL's rotary damper is often blamed for the bike's handling woes of the time. Suzuki went for the rotary shock design because a V-twin makes exhaust routing of the rear cylinder difficult. Packaging a bike up is a tricky task when an exit pipe sits where a traditional monoshock should. That is when heads start to get scratched and new solutions are formulated. The rotary option (similar to that used on F1 cars then and now) would split the springing and damping functions of a traditional shock, enabling the TL to have a short wheelbase and dissipate heat better.

In practice, the Kayaba shock struggled to deal with high internal working pressures.

Stiction is also a problem of the design, thanks to complicated sealing arrangements inside (this also leading to the unit being non-serviceable). The exhaust being close (not so on the TL1000R) also caused overheating, which the design was supposed to cure. But other influences also conspired against the rotary damper – the short wheelbase and no steering damper.

The TL1000S never was able to shake off its reputation as flawed. The death of bikers Simon Carolan-Evans in April 1997 and Farshad Sanjoori that August on TLs saw to that. Taming the beast came when Performoto made a steering-damper kit for the bike and Maxton did a £650 fork and shock mod kit that



replaced the rotary damper with a conventional one, but it was still flighty. Many blamed a 53-47% rear-end weight bias, torque motor and cheap suspension that made it slap. A later Suzuki recall to fit steering dampers did seem to calm down the TL a tad (Suzuki at the time said the damper was going to be on all 1998 models) but for many the original model pre-damper is the one to find and buy and was the most powerful and seems so, too. Some were tested at 120bhp...

## SPECIFICATIONS

1999  
**SUZUKI**  
**TL1000S**

### ENGINE

996cc, liquid-cooled, eight-valve, dohc, 90° V-twin

**MAXIMUM POWER:**  
125bhp @ 8500rpm

**MAXIMUM TORQUE:**  
77lb-ft @ 8000rpm

**TRANSMISSION:**  
6-speed

**FINAL DRIVE:**  
chain

**FRAME:**  
aluminium trellis

### SUSPENSION:

Front: 43mm inverted forks, fully adjustable; Rear: Rotary damper system, fully adjustable with separate spring

### BRAKES:

Front: Twin 320mm discs with Tokico four-piston calipers; Rear: 220mm disc, twin-piston caliper

### TYRES:

Front: 120/70-17  
Rear: 190/50-17

**SEAT HEIGHT:**  
835mm

**WHEELBASE:**  
1415mm

**DRY WEIGHT:**  
190kg

**FUEL CAPACITY:**  
17 litres

almost any old dog, but this one is a bit too pristine. I want a shabby old sleeper that looks rough but goes well.

My rose-tinted visor thought the TL-S would be a belter, offering manful power and requiring manful control. But it's a bit of a pussycat, all told. It got a reputation as it couldn't deliver much else to be honest – and suckers like me dined out on this controversy. I'm not saying it didn't have issues, because it did, but the biggest issue it had was the people on top trying to force it to be a GSX-R750. Had I bought one back in 1999, I'm pretty sure I'd still own it. Characterful bikes from Japan don't come round very often, and the TL-S is surely the most characterful of the lot, certainly more so than my first R6... **cmm**







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## Get down & dirty!

If you love old dirt bikes, there's only one place to go in October and that's The International Dirt Bike Show.

Straddling the last weekend in October and the first in November, it's Europe's largest dedicated off-road event. The show takes place at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire and promises once more to be fun for all the family. There are a number of things to look out for, including the activity hall so you can 'have a go' and live action in one of the many arenas.

The event takes place over four action-packed days. For the third consecutive year, the main manufacturers have confirmed their attendance, with Honda, Kawasaki, Husqvarna,

**INTERNATIONAL  
DIRT BIKE  
SHOW  
2016**  
27th-30th Oct  
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KTM, Suzuki and Yamaha all showcasing their latest offerings. Show organiser Nick Mowbray says: "It is always something of a challenge for the Dirt Bike Show team to maintain upward momentum and to ensure that off-road fans have a great time, feel they have received top value for money and leave the event buzzing; but it's a challenge we relish! We can't wait to open the doors at Stoneleigh Park on Thursday, October 29. See you there!"

■ Visit [www.dirtbike.show.co.uk](http://www.dirtbike.show.co.uk) for updates.



Well worth popping along to the IDBS!



## SUZUKI NEEDS YOU!

To help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the seminal GSX-R range, Suzuki wants to get the best models from the family on their stand for the Motorcycle Live show later this year.

In the run up to this year's show, GSX-R owners are being invited to upload photos of their bikes to Suzuki's website to create a gallery of the iconic sports bike range.

Owners who have their GSX-R selected to appear on display at

Motorcycle Live will receive two free tickets to the show as well as two season passes to next year's British Superbike championship. Suzuki GB marketing manager Rob Cooper says: "Thirty years of GSX-R is a hugely significant milestone for one of the world's most popular range of motorcycles. It was only right to have a display at this year's Motorcycle Live show and we're excited about getting GSX-R owners involved and can't wait to see the photos, from the original GSX-R750 to the first 1100 model, SRADs to the first GSX-R1000, and everything in between."

So, visit the special GSX-R page here: [www.suzuki-gb.co.uk/gsx-r-competition](http://www.suzuki-gb.co.uk/gsx-r-competition) Suzuki can be found on stand 4D20 at this year's Motorcycle Live, which takes place from November 28 to December 6 at the NEC in Birmingham.

■ For tickets and show information visit [www.motorcyclelive.co.uk](http://www.motorcyclelive.co.uk).



## We want your classic!

We still want to hear from you if you have a bike that deserves a place on our stand at the 22nd Carole Nash CMM Show at Stafford.

Thanks to the many people who've come forward so far, we will be in touch. YOUR bike could join CMM regular machines such as Steve 'Stavros' Parrish's Yamaha FZ750 Superstocker (if it's finally finished) and the Suzuki Apprentices 'work so far' restoration of the 1990 Suzuki GSX-R1100L (see page 94 for how that's shaping up...)

To refresh your memories, we will need to get the bike on the Friday evening and you can take it away on the Sunday as the show closes. We will insure the bike for the duration of its stay on our stand and we hope to have a prize for the machine that CMM's staff and contributors think is the best overall!

Keep the applications coming to [editorial@classicmechanics.com](mailto:editorial@classicmechanics.com) and meanwhile head to page 18 to get more details on the show, which takes place at Staffordshire County Showground, over October 17-18.





RF900 in full flight.

## SNETTERTON 4-HOUR IS GO!

Now, obviously you will be heading to the *CMM* show at Stafford over the weekend of October 17-18, but here's another event you could pop to on the day you're not with us!

Our friends at Classic Bike Trackdays have their final blast for the year will from Friday, October 16, to Sunday, October 17, at Snetterton, so that's

a full three days of hedonistic motorcycling mayhem for you to go along and enjoy.

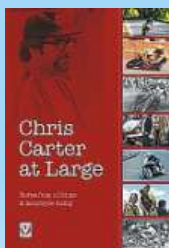
It all kicks off with a classic bike trackday on Friday and leads into a fantastic mix of trackday riding and classic racing throughout Saturday and Sunday, all leading to the highlight a 4-hour classic endurance race on the Sunday afternoon.

■ If you want to check it out, go to:  
[www.classicbiketackdays.com](http://www.classicbiketackdays.com)

## A life in bike racing...

Chris Carter was a big name in bike race circles in the 1970s to the 1990s. He was a journalist, commentator and broadcaster at the very top level of motorcycle sport. Now in retirement, he's written his memoirs, which are a funny, fascinating and unique insider view of professional motorcycling over six decades.

Chris was at Grand Prix, trials and speedway events and big internationals like Daytona and Macau. The book is full of remarkable stories and amusing anecdotes of a life in racing spent alongside some of the biggest names in the business. The book includes a foreword by Kevin Schwantz. The book is available direct from Chris at: [carterbsn@gmail.com](mailto:carterbsn@gmail.com) priced at £17.99 plus p&p.



# MARK WILLIAMS

## WORDS MEAN NOTHING

What passes for sales patter, asks Williams?

**A**shamed though I am to admit it, more often than not the first thing I turn to when each new issue of this mighty organ flops through my letterbox is the classifieds section. Mainly because I just love applying my wild and let's face it, cynical imagination to what many of the advertisers claim for their offerings. And after decades of painstaking observation, I reckon 'Genuine Reason for Sale' must be the biggest fib in classic bike jargon. How anybody can commit these words to print, where they stand as permanent testimony to your treachery, I don't know but the truth of the matter is that there are only three 'Genuine Reasons' for unloading your precious classic, namely:

- 1) You need the money (to buy another pride and joy that hopefully won't be such a time-consuming money-pit as this one).
- 2) You need the money (to pay off the vast debts you incurred rebuilding the aforementioned pride and joy).
- 3) You need the money (to buy a new kitchen in order to placate the missus over the one you ruined rebuilding the aforementioned pride and joy in last winter. And maybe a bathroom, too, if the rebuild involved a two-stroke exhaust system).

So however much this rankles, let's invoke a bit of candid self-policing in the classic classifieds before the Advertising Standards Authority turn their beady eyes our way and the game is finally up. As ever, I'll lead from the front and admit that I'm guilty as sin when it comes to misleading wording but as I've mentioned before I was once a full-time professional hack. And I can remember, for example, the Yamaha DT175-engined Dalesman-framed enduro I built back in the mid-70s. Its construction, by the way, would've justified Williams' Third Genuine Reason, see above, but fortunately I was a bachelor at the time.

The work included converting the Dalesman's frame into an autolube reservoir and a fantastically complicated arrangement I'd designed for a Q/D seat unit, thus providing access to vital electrics and a Tupperware airbox. Apart from proving that I couldn't, the welding never really met its structural and geometric obligations so that rather than oozing oil from its engine in time-honoured Brit-bike fashion, the YamaDale instead oozed oil from its chassis, the seat only stayed in place when held firmly down by the rider's bum, and the chain alignment was 5mm out of kilter prompting a heavy toll in spring links. The Genuine Reason for Sale when I became too exasperated to try and right the wrongs I had wrought was, when asked, 'Well I'm looking for a new challenge'. Yeah, right, the challenge of finding something to do with all the spare time I'd have after buying a brand new off-roader instead of cobbling together a bitza.

A little later I deployed further poetic licence flogging my Yamaha XS-2 which for once wasn't a bitza, although in the interests of trying to get it to negotiate corners without throwing me off, it had been fitted with a roller bearing swinging arm, Koni shocks and different fork springs. Oh, and in order to comprehensively annoy the neighbours it had been treated to straight through 'silencers'. Try as I might it seemed no-one wanted such an unstuck XS-2, so eventually I resorted to an advert whose 'Genuine Reason' was the need to get something more suitable for commuting, with the consequent temptation of 'possible part-ex'. Well the chumps who came along with wee CD175s and horrid old BSA Starfires were given the obvious 'Well 'fraid it's not quite for me', little knowing that my real replacement for the Yam was that most ideal of commuter bikes, a Laverda Jota. Which in due course and after much lying I eventually found the money to buy.

And that was one bike I needed no 'Genuine Reason' – however bogus – to flog five years later to the first person who saw it, and something that unlike the YamaDale and the XS-2, I was truly sorry to say goodbye to.





## THE AUTUMN STAFFORD SALE

The Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show  
Sunday 18 October 2015

### LOT PREVIEW

[bonhams.com/22727](http://bonhams.com/22727)

### COMPLIMENTARY AUCTION APPRAISAL

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[ukmotorcycles@bonhams.com](mailto:ukmotorcycles@bonhams.com)

### CATALOGUE

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[subscriptions@bonhams.com](mailto:subscriptions@bonhams.com)



1972 SUZUKI GT750  
£6,200 - 7,000



1975 SUZUKI GT250  
£3,200 - 4,000



1987 KAWASAKI GPZ900R NINJA  
£2,200 - 3,000



1989 HONDA NSR250R SP  
£6,000 - 8,000

# Bonhams

[bonhams.com/motorcycles](http://bonhams.com/motorcycles)





Saucy and unique.

## SALON PRIVE HONDA

Our own John Nutting 'spotted' this beauty. He says: "This neat special is appearing at the Blenheim Palace Salon Prive and it's lovely. In the PR blurb it says: 1974 Honda SS 250 Super Sport. Starting life as a 1974 Honda SS50 four-speed moped, this Honda SS 250 Super Sport was bought in bits by the current owner.

The chassis was then modified and strengthened in order to take a water cooled 250cc motocross race engine producing 43bhp. A new swingarm was also fabricated from high tensile

tube to withstand the additional power of the engine, and the bike features bespoke stainless steel as well as updated wheels and brakes. To complete the work, the bike is now finished with an original Honda blue grey frame and contrasting candy red fuel tank.

We love it! We like to simply show you a saucy bike we've 'spotted' during the month.

■ You can share them with us too, drop us a pic at the normal address.

## SPRINT SUCCESS!

August saw the classic Ramsgate Spring event make a welcome return in the Kent seaside town.

Held annually from 1956 to 1968, the Ramsgate Sprint was one of the country's leading events playing host to the nation's top riders. Classic bikes from the period returned to the historic venue at Ramsgate's Western Undercliff and the event was considered a big success, with not just bikes, but a host of events for all the family. It is hoped that this will make a regular return on the classic calendar.



Thousands flocked to Ramsgate.

## SCOOPERMAN!

The sunny side of the classic world, with the VJMC's **Steve Cooper**

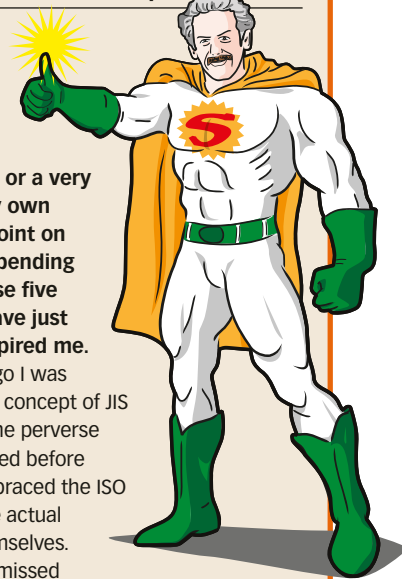
Whoever said "every day is school day" was either a patronising arse or a very wise person: my own personal view point on this changes depending on whether those five simple words have just infuriated or inspired me.

A little while ago I was introduced to the concept of JIS screws. No, not the perverse thread pitches used before the Japanese embraced the ISO standards but the actual screw heads themselves. Perhaps I've just missed this one over the years or I'm genuinely thick but I've learnt from the experience of someone else. Apparently the cross head screws I've been spinning all these year might look like a Phillips head but they are different. If my teacher is correct the angle of the recess is slightly steeper than a Phillips driver but shorter. Apparently a reasonable facsimile of a genuine Japanese driver can be affected by simply taking the tip off your normal screw driver. It's not 100% perfect but it works well enough. Furthermore this is the genuine reason why those pesky round headed screws are such a pain to remove; normal screw drivers are inclined to 'cam-out' so I'm told. Knowing that my sage-like instructor has never owned an impact driver in 43 years of bike business pretty much vouches for the accuracy of his instruction.

No man is an island as they say; picking up a trick, a dodge or a new technique can make any workshop task just that little bit easier. The ability to learn from others is as much of a gift as the instruction itself. You are emphatically never too old to learn. If you care to look around in the world of craftsmen and artisans you will see that the vast majority of them are from older generations.

Despite what the governments of the day might have you believe it's only in the very recent past that education and commerce has truly woken up to the fact that people/customers need skills beyond a damn keyboard and PC. For some four decades or more younger people have been misled to believe if they use their hands in a career they've somehow squandered their education.

I know this having been indoctrinated with the false concept as a kid and subsequently seen it as a school governor. Many of my school mates went into building and car repair. Most are now retired living in a Costa villa. They trained with their hands, on the job, and every day was very much a school day!



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# CALENDAR

see you there!

## OCTOBER



Stafford in the middle of October is the only place to be for any discerning classic motorcycle aficionado!

This year's 22nd Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show features road-race legend and 23-time TT winner John McGuinness as guest of honour. The Morecambe Missile will be on stage regularly giving us all an inside look at his racing career, which spans back to the early 1990s, when he owned and raced a Kawasaki KR-1S. His love of 250 two-strokes led to him becoming British 250 champ in 1999.

Much as we love McPint and his stories of derring-do, the bikes are always the stars at Stafford. Machines from the 1960s, 70s, 80s through to the 1990s are going to be there in their hundreds. Meanwhile a similar number of traders and dealers will be in attendance, allowing show-goers the chance to stock up on parts, spares, accessories, tools, riding gear, memorabilia and much more!

The Restoration Theatre, a popular new attraction to April's Stafford show, will be making its October debut and will once again be hosted by Pete Thorne



of ITV's The Motorbike Show. He'll be on stage at various times throughout the weekend presenting information and advice on key restoration and maintenance issues.

Throw in the *Classic Racer* GP Paddock, the off-road *Classic Dirt Bike* Hall, the Bonhams Auction, the cavalcade sessions in the showground's main ring and you can see why this Stafford show is set to be one of the biggest and best yet!

For more information about tickets go to:  
[www.classicbikeshows.com](http://www.classicbikeshows.com)



### 04 Hornet Swarm & Hondas,

Ace Cafe, North Circular, London NW10 7UD [www.ace-cafe-london.com](http://www.ace-cafe-london.com), 020 8961 1000

### 11 Normous Newark Autojumble,

Newark Showground, Newark, Notts NG24 2NY

[www.classicbikeshows.com](http://www.classicbikeshows.com), 01507 529529

### 12 Brit Vs (Vincents & Velocette) & Classic Bike Day,

Ace Cafe, [www.ace-cafe-london.com](http://www.ace-cafe-london.com)

### 16 Classic Bike Trackdays

Snetterton 4-Hour race and trackday  
[www.classicbiketrackdays.com](http://www.classicbiketrackdays.com)

### 17 22nd Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show:

[www.classicbikeshows.com](http://www.classicbikeshows.com)

### 18 Red Oktober

Eastern Bloc Vehicle Day,  
Ace Café, 020 8961 1000

### 24 Kempton Park Autojumble,

Kempton Park Racecourse,  
Sunbury-On-Thames,  
Middlesex TW16 5AQ.  
[www.egp-enterprises.co.uk](http://www.egp-enterprises.co.uk)

### 25 Rat, Brat, Bobbers,

Choppers & Rat Rods,  
Ace Café [www.ace-cafe-london.com](http://www.ace-cafe-london.com)

### 25 Huddersfield Autojumble,

Old Market Building, Brook Street,  
Huddersfield HD1 1RG.  
[www.phoenixfairs.jimdo.com](http://www.phoenixfairs.jimdo.com)  
or 07795 505388

### 25 South of England Real Classic Bike Show and Jumble,

Ardingly, West Sussex RH17 6TL  
[www.elk-promotions.co.uk](http://www.elk-promotions.co.uk)

### 29 International Dirt Bike Show,

[www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk](http://www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk)



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## ANGLIA CAR AUCTIONS



# FEEDBACK.

Post to **Mechanics**, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ  
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## WIN a Scottoiler bike care pack

Every month we're giving away a Scottoiler Bike Care Pack to the writer of the best submitted letter we receive. The pack contains two litres of Scottoiler FS365; giving you the ultimate in summer and winter corrosion protection. Simply get in touch by sending emails to: [letters@classicmechanics.com](mailto:letters@classicmechanics.com) or post your letters to the normal address, giving contact details just in case you are that lucky winner.

## \*\*\*\*\*Prize winner\*\*\*\*\*

### FireStorm in a teacup

Having waited eagerly for a month for your review of the Honda VTR1000 FireStorm (CMM September 2015) I felt let down by it. Like most other reviews you used the first version for your test and not the later Mk.2. This version was much improved over the old model, apart from the speedo, which was as good as useless.

I find my 3000-mile example an adequate means of transport. Its biggest failing is even with its bigger tank it's a thirsty beast and you still have to keep an eye on the fuel gauge, not fitted to the Mk.1. It is also not very handy in town but give it some open road and we're in business as it is comfy, reliable and quick.

**J Knowles**

**Bertie says:** "The first model came out in 1997, the Mk.2 in 2001 – which is effectively outside our VJMC rule for the mag of 15 years or over! But still we did regale you with the positives and also mentioned the later model having the larger tank and in fact the bike in the test had the bigger tank retrofitted to it, but any VTR has range issues."



A VTR with a bigger tank.

### Pillion plea

I'm a self-confessed loner. I love nothing better than to spend a few hours in the garage or workshop with a mug of coffee and just the radio for company. All the troubles of the world are left behind for those few hours, as all my attention is focused on my bike. However, all this would also feel rather pointless if I wasn't able to spend time sharing my interest in all things two-wheeled with others. Be that through bike clubs, friends or relatives. It's that camaraderie that binds bikers and is crucial to my wider enjoyment of this most excellent of hobbies.

I've realised the importance of this recently, as I remarried a couple of years ago, and while no dyed-in-the-wool biker, my wife has at least shown a passing fascination with my eccentricity for bike collecting, and a tolerance to oily fingerprints on door handles.

My wife is my confidante and best friend, so I have been delighted that she has even ventured out enthusiastically for a few rides on the back. She's bought her own leathers and now shows every sign of being dragged unwittingly into the biking fray. However, as welcome as this is, it is giving me a small and unexpected problem. We are enjoying biking together, but from a slightly different perspective: with her biking as a pillion.



Despite more decades on a bike than I care to recall, I've never been a regular pillion!

This letter is a plea for an article to help us, and anyone else like us, share our hobby with just a little more mutual understanding. Given the excellent quality of your articles each month I am confident that you could come up with something that not just helps pillions, but also gives some advice to the pilots as to how we might be just that little more accommodating.

**Steven Bird**

**Bertie says:** "Steven, what a lovely letter – it gets our prize this month. What say you people? Would you read riding tips to help you pootle along with a pillion more proficiently?"

### A legend writes...

Jon Bentman's piece on the VT500E contained much useful info, but also a few misplaced factoids. When *Which Bike?* tested the VT500E in 1983 we got 111mph out of it – 11mph faster than Honda's own CX500E, which was also 75 quid dearer, at £1770. As Bentman says, it did however offer similar performance to contemporary 500-550cc UJMs, but boasted more mid-range grunt and with the

exception of Kawa's GT550, a lower price.

He's also right in saying that many were despatched, and for the abovementioned reasons, but as co-owner of a despatch company myself in the mid-80s, we had few maintenance issues with the VTs we ran, and certainly none involving floppy camchains. And we never had problems with bendy sidestands.

Also, I recently imported a VT500FT Ascot, the 'pseudo flat-tracker', from the USA,



and according to the manual that came with it, a 'partial engine removal' certainly isn't necessary to adjust the valves in the rear cylinder head.

However, as the VT500 Forum's Jim Witherspoon





**Machine repaired!**

notes, some E-model parts are now difficult to come by, most notably bodywork, but a lot of mechanical and chassis items are common to the Ascot and Shadow models, which can be sourced from the Continent and the US relatively easily.

**Mark Williams**

**Bertie says:** "To err is human. In the letter you spelt JB's name wrong!"

### Man down!

I was cheered to see my Speed Triple in the July issue in your piece about the Welsh Classic Festival at Anglesey. Sadly, five hours after leaving the event, I crashed, holing the clutch casing and trashing my lid and gloves. I was also concussed. The bike's now rebuilt with thanks to Scorpion Exhausts, who rebuilt the right-hand end can for £50.

Maidstone Motoliner straightened the forks, front wheel, discs and clip-ons, while Bike Torque Racing in Frome did an outstanding job to repair the front Brembo radial master cylinder. Scorpion Electronics in Kings Lynn did a tacho repair. It was the usual trawl through the likes of the excellent National Triumph (thanks Ivan) for other spares and eBay for bits and pieces.



**And before the crash.**

With some other service items done the bike feels better than before (the missus reckons it looks better too). These bikes are very well built and I'm sure that's why it's still on the road because previous owners of this machine have crashed it too. I know the guy who designed the swingarm on these bikes. There's a bothersome design error – the chain slider block has a securing bolt set directly behind a frame spar, making it inaccessible, so the swingarm has to be rotated out to get at a small M6 bolt! Anyway, I look forward to more reads of the magazine – super hero cartoons are fine with me!

I like Stan Stephens' articles, Mark Williams, Scoop and the whole thing. The writing, subject and photography tell me what I need to know and what I didn't know about something new.

**Mark Kelly**

**Bertie says:** "Cheers Mark. Good to meet you and glad you're okay."

### Be assured when you insure!

I reinsured my bike with Bennetts and I was asked if the bike had been modified. My response was no (no trick exhausts, air filters, brake changes, bodywork etc.) but when I told him I had a top box they charged me a further £30, even though it's not fitted half the time!

What worries me is that I could have been in breach of my policy without knowing it. I wonder how many readers are unknowingly in the same

## Super Super Sausage

Just a quick note to say thanks for sorting the fun event at the Super Sausage café in August as me and my mates had a top day riding the 150 mile round trip to see the lovely bikes. It was good to see so many people turning up on bikes new and old, although next time could we all have a free cup of tea?

**Basher Smith**



**Dave Watkins was there!**

**Bertie says:** "Glad you liked it Basher – dread to think how you got that name! As to freebies, I think the management line is that 'times are tough, so tough!'"



**New and old at the Super Sausage!**

position? Bennetts advertise that they ignore 16 of the most popular mods and I would have presumed that was one of them if I had not mentioned it. Check with your insurer carefully.

**J Knowles**

**Bertie says:** "You again Mr Knowles? Very good point – insurance is something we will be looking at in detail, we think. And check out Steve Cooper's issues on page 78."

### Archive error

Just before anyone else points out the issue with the Archive shot in the September issue, it's not Alex Bedford but Pete Wild – you can't mistake Pete's beak. These things happen – people change numbers and the snapper doesn't check, etc.

**Malc Wheeler**

**Bertie says:** "Ahhh thank you! And if anyone wants to keep abreast of all things to do with classic racing, do check

out Malc's magazine – *Classic Racer*."

### Let there be light

Is there any chance of an article about converting headlights and others to LEDs to try and take the pressure off the generator? Like with Spa Katana, but more details and outlining the pros and cons with such a set-up.

**Nigel**

**Bertie says:** "Sounds like a great idea to me – Paul Berryman, where art thou?"



**Nice headlight PB!**



# Show us yours



We want to see YOUR pride and joy in our pages, so you can share what you ride and restore with fellow readers.

Email your hi-res shots to **bsimmonds@mortons.co.uk** or mail in some photos to the address at the front of the mag. Let us know what you've done and how you've done it and send before and after shots if you can. Do get in touch. *Bertie.*

We've teamed up with **The Hobby Company** [www.hobbyco.net](http://www.hobbyco.net) which distributes Tamiya plastic motorcycle kits in the UK to give our favourite restoration one of its amazing motorcycles in miniature. So, send in your pictures of your bikes and you could win the chance to indulge in a miniature motorcycle restoration of your own. Remember to send your name and address on each submission so we know where to post the kit.

## Al Ford's BMW R75/6

After a beer or several and dangerously with a laptop I stumbled across this R75/6 basket case. I declined to buy because it was too expensive. Days later the seller asked if I was still interested and I cheekily replied in the affirmative, but only if half the price. He accepted and I had to do a 300-mile round trip stuffing the bits in my Vauxhall Vectra 'Tardis'.

It was an ex-police bike with 40,000 on the clock and when I stripped it down there was hardly any wear on camshaft, crank, followers, splines etc. it had not been taxed since 1980, so maybe it was the correct mileage. A list of needs was put together and surprisingly all the important and fiddly parts were there, but anything that moved and was considered a consumable was replaced. Two years later I have this beauty. It's not for the purists as I don't like the stock pipes and like the minimalist approach to rebuilds.

Sure, the replacement tank has some marks on it but I like bikes to ride, not to be afraid of leaving outside. It was not cheap to do, thanks to BMW parts prices, but I like to make things work again, I like to think I saved it. The many nights in the workshop with the odd can of beer kept me amused for two winters, and with three women and a female dog in the house, it was priceless! Oh and a little tip: cider vinegar is brilliant for cleaning rusty parts, the tank especially, you do need to be patient though.

Here in deepest Dorset the local Cider Museum made me 25 litres for a very good price and I used it to clean all sorts including seized tools. Also the best way to clean textured alloy covers without making it too shiny is to use Scotch-Brite and WD40.



**KIT WINNER**







## Jason Teague's 1980 Honda CX500

Hello from the States! I look forward to your magazine every month. I bought this 1980 CX500 C as a basket case in October 2013. With the massive help from my best friends Shane and Steve, I am very happy with what we came up with. A new sub-frame was made, along with brackets in the seat to hold the electronics and a lightweight lithium battery. The bike has 40,000 miles showing, so we freshened-up the motor with new seals, adjusted the valves, new clutch, cables, bearings, pretty much all parts on the bike were cleaned or replaced. I have also attached a picture of my small collection of bikes which include a 2004 RC51 (SP-2), a 2011 Ducati Monster 796 and a 2013 F6B.



## Chris Frazer's 1978 Yamaha DT400E

I bought this 1978 Yamaha DT400E in March 2015 in scrap condition and imported from the USA. Everything was just about broken and rusted up and I spent three months to get the bike looking like it does now. There are still a few jobs left to do on the Yamaha but I'm looking forward to showing and using the Yamaha when the sun shines. If it ever does.



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## Barry Coles' 1999 MV Agusta 750 F4

Great mag! I've been reading it since I was 17 – I'm now 56! I got the kids to send these pictures to you as I haven't a clue! It's of my MV Agusta 750 F4, 1999 reg.

I had a brand new GSX-R1000 and part-exed it for this MV with 2000 miles on it. It is bog standard apart from the gold wheels and polished rims which I think prettied it up! It's awesome to ride and the handling is way beyond my abilities and I've had 40 bikes. I love the Jap bikes but when I pull up at Box Hill etc. it's nice to have something a little different. It's not the most comfortable of bikes but I love the styling. I have a Suzuki GSF600S Bandit for when I'm feeling lazy.



## Mark Owen's 1975 Suzuki GT550 and 1978 Suzuki GT500

I have two bikes, so I guess I am a greedy sod. I never really liked Suzukis as a rule, I was more a Yamaha lad so these two bikes break all the rules for me. One is a 78 Suzuki GT500 and the other a 75 Suzuki GT550. My Suzuki GT550 started four years ago when I put on a bid for a bottom half of an engine!

I don't know why! What would I do with an engine that was incomplete and had been sitting on someone's garage floor caked up in mud?

I won and paid the £40 and drove down to Essex and put

the lump in the boot of the car. It had no barrels, cylinder head or pistons: just the crankcases, but all the guts were there except the starter motor. Two years later it was finished. This was my first restoration as I had not really been into doing stuff up. Everyone thought I was completely bonkers because I basically had nothing at all. Sourcing the parts was fun but very time consuming. A lot of this bike was made from parts shipped over from the States. It's not one for the purists but it draws attention. The Suzuki

GT500 I bought from a bloke when I found it laying up the side of his garage. It was a real mess as the engine had dropped a con rod and this had gone straight through the crankcase.

This took about two years to sort out with a complete engine rebuild on a sourced crankcase.

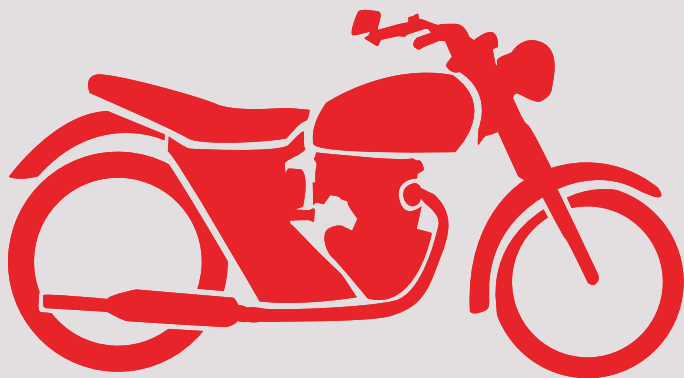
The biggest headache was to save the rear chrome mudguard as the middle section had completely rotted through.

I repaired it with some sheet metal that I had rolled to shape and after cutting the rot out welded this in place.

Any dimples I filled with a braze I love the results.



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WORDS AND PICTURES: JOHN WOODS

## The full SP

Jealousy can be a positive emotion, honest! Just ask **John Woods**, who was always casting a covetous eye on a mate's ride.

**M**y mate Roland Jones is a bit of a Yamaha nut and despite his bike having had its fair share of mechanical problems, I always had a slightly jealous eye on his bike whenever we were on a ride together.

The bike in question is a Yamaha FZR400RR SP (3TJ2.) It just looks so good on the road and as Roland competed in the TT in his early years of biking, it appeared to punch above its weight on the handling and braking front too.

Roland and I have been riding together for the last eight years and as time went on, my appreciation for his bike grew to the point that I was looking round for an FZR for myself. At the time I was involved with the rebuild of a Kawasaki Turbo and typically the bike had taken more than its fair share of time and money, but finally in summer 2012 that bike was pretty much sorted.

While on holiday in France with the missus I saw a 3TJ2 for sale on eBay, so I dropped a couple of emails to the guy selling it and he seemed honest about its history, telling me that it had fuelling issues and would not tick over, had no tax







or MoT and would benefit from some new rubber. Apparently he and a mate had bought it to race but lost interest before they started. I remember the auction ended on the night of the opening ceremony of the Olympics. I won gold and duly rented a van to take me from Gloucestershire to Essex for the pick-up.

The bike was as described. It was gutless and spluttering with a strong smell of unburnt fuel. Barring a few original parts missing it was pretty well all there. It was only when I got the bike home that I realised how much of it was not actually original including bits such as fastenings and the little odds and sods that Yamaha charge big money for. Cosmetically, the bike was pretty ragged but the history with it had shown it had done only 19,000km.

Despite the motor not running well, it had no knocks or rattles and the gearbox seemed okay. You could select all the gears but as the bike would pull away with some gusto, the engine would suddenly lose all of its power. As mentioned it wouldn't tick over and there was hardly a whisper from the cam area at all.

Aesthetically, it was not very pleasing. The tailpiece was an aftermarket glass-fibre job, which didn't really fit that well and every time it was removed it brought half the wiring harness with it... The fairing had lost its 'ears' and the mirrors were AWOL. The 'floating' brakes seemed to have been modified so there was around 3-4mm of play in the front discs. I just chucked the lot in the bin. Despite all this, I had an SP!

I stripped the bike down to frame and engine to assess the amount of work that was needed. During the strip-down I found more and more missing and broken parts, including a broken air filter case and a piece of garden hose acting as the engine breather. There were no oil leaks and it had a new chain and sprockets, so that was something.

Searching for parts was left to a mate who is a dab hand with the overseas websites, particularly Yahoo Japan. A fairing turned up pretty soon, but I had given up all hope of finding a tailpiece, but finally I won one for buttons – again on Yahoo Japan. I thought bits like this would be commonplace – but they're not, so you have to be pretty lucky to find fairings and tail units.

The frame and swingarm had been polished at some stage and I gave a great deal of thought to restoring this to the factory finish, but eventually decided that polished was 'en-vogue' back in the day, so I decided to stick with it and polished up the bits I had already experimented on. With the front discs binned, I sought some decent second hand



**THE REBUILD: 1/ The bike as bought: looks an easy job, right? Wrong! 2/ Bodywork was a mix of OE and aftermarket until success on Yahoo Japan. 3/ Many frustrating hours on the motor. 4/ When exhausts off, solution was found. 5/ Lovely brakes took time.**

ones on eBay and nailed them for next to nothing only to find they were incorrectly described and so too small. Sometimes with bike restoration lady luck visits you and in this case she arrived in the form of a disgruntled eBay buyer who had bought a lightly used pair on eBay that were too big for his bike so we did a direct swap!

The bobbins on the discs were sloppy so I made 25 new ones (only 20 needed but I wanted some spares) in total on the Myford lathe and I shimmed and 'wave washered' and circlipped the whole set-up. Making this type of product on a Myford requires about 20 tool changes per piece. Yet again this was extremely time consuming and expensive, but the net result is good, if not original, but the originals cost a fortune. It worked though, as I then had a very powerful and progressive front brake after the addition of new original pads.

As a matter of routine, I always renew seals and brake lines, using original seals and aftermarket braided lines. I used Elliotts in Swindon for all the new parts I needed as the company had a pretty good grip on the grey import models and was very competitive on price. I replaced the fork bushes and seals and all the swingarm linkage bearings and wheel bearings just to be on the safe side.

To refurbish the forks I could not find a colour match for the scratched fork sliders that needed refinishing. Eventually, I found someone who was willing to mix up a paint based on the original colour determined by a very clever colour matching machine. They actually made up a quarter litre of paint and it was very cheap considering all the trouble they went to. The stanchions were in surprisingly good condition and for the first time on any resto I have done I did not send them away to be reground and rechromed.

My first job on the motor was to sort out the







**THE REBUILD: 1/** Wiring originally came off with seat hump! **2/** Remote reservoir for shock. **3/** Original can hard to find now. **4/** One of these hid the dark secret! **5/** Original discs ditched.

irritating fuelling problem that would not let the bike tick over and causing it to lose power. While messing about with the carbs I noticed a weak spark on cylinders two and three; the result of two defunct HT leads. I bought two new HT leads and changed all the carb rubbers and seals and reset the adjustments to factory settings. I then realised the needles and jets were not original and priced up new ones from Yamaha. Just as I was about to part with my hard-earned, someone on the 400Greybike.com forum offered me a set of original carbs for not very much, so I transferred all the good bits I had to my refurbished carbs.

While messing about with the carbs I did a compression test and found good compression across all pots. With the refurbished carbs and the confidence that the engine was delivering good compression, I took it out for run but the problems were still there. I decided it was time to look deeper into the bowels of the engine. Whipping the cam cover off I was surprised to find the majority of the inlet valves had no clearance at all (when cold). How

could this be when I had such good compression? So, I took the head off, and removed the valves and springs to find that a previous owner at some stage in the bike's life had reground all of the valves and recut the seats using techniques and angles that I could not find in any book. Simply put, the head was knackered and beyond economic repair, but a mate of mine who runs a performance engine shop reground and salvaged the valves. At this point I had to search for a new head and that's where the power of the internet kicked in once more.

The 400greybike.com website revealed a non-forum member with a 3TJ2 head they wanted to sell. The replacement head was skimmed, the seats recut, and a careful head rebuild ensued. While I had the head off I thought I would take off the barrels and check the bores, rings, pistons etc and replace the base gasket. To my horror I found massive scoring on cylinder number two. At this point I threw away my cheap compression tester and sought a rebore. Knowing this would be expensive I checked everything very carefully and found the pistons were in good condition and well within tolerance. I did some maths on the cost of a rebore (including new oversized pistons and rings) and it was so depressing that I started to look for a cheaper way of doing things. I wondered if it would be possible to reline the bores and utilise the existing pistons. An internet search threw up a company called LA Sleeve in Los Angeles that had four (and only four) replacement liners in stock. I bought them, paid the agonising duty and got my mate Mark Maynard, of Maynard Engineering in Stroud, to remove the old liners and fit the new ones. He bored and honed them then I refitted the barrels and head with new standard size rings.

After this amount of messing about I was surprised the bike started on the first press of the magic button. I took it out for a run with no body work (private land officer) and the fuelling issues had disappeared! You need to give these bikes a fistful as they're revvy and the gearing is so high, but I was delighted to finally sort out the problem after nine months. My joy was short-lived. The bike was now smoking and I was confused as to whether this was just burning off rebuild oil or something more sinister. After an hour it was still smoking – so it was time to delve inside once more. When I took the exhaust off it was obvious that it was cylinder

The SP is pure race.







**“Restoring bikes is a funny old thing. You appear to make no progress for months and then all of a sudden you make a real breakthrough. That happened when the plastics came back from Dream Machine.”**

number one causing the problems as the header pipe had lots of oil in it. Taking the head off was becoming second nature and I was expecting to see number one cylinder scored or with a broken piston ring. Instead, I saw nothing wrong – just lots of oil, so I figured it may be a head problem. Finally, I noticed one of the new valve stem seals was defective. It looked like during the injection process not enough material had been injected and left it not sealing properly on the stem. I had some spare seals so I put one in and put the bike back together taking the opportunity to check the valve clearances while it was apart. Finally, the EXUP valve wasn't seized but it was stiff so I dismantled it and cleaned it. Getting it apart involved shearing all the hex screws, so Time-Serts and HeliCoils became the order of the day.

Gordon Kingham, of Top Guns in Cambridge, Gloucestershire, sprayed various non-plastic bits and Mikris, of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, coated many other parts, including the exhaust, which although not a match to the original, is a brilliant likeness and a fantastic finish. The majority of the plastics were scratched or cracked including the recent additions from Japan. So it meant the laborious task of fixing all the plastics by cutting opening the cracks with a conical Dremmel bit and either plastic welding or adhering with Plastex – a brilliant find. Plastex looks like there isn't enough when you buy it but it goes a long way once you get the hang of using it. I rubbed down, filled and primed all the panels that needed painting.

Restoring bikes is a funny thing. You appear to make no progress for months and then, all of a sudden you make a real breakthrough. When all the plastics came back from painting at Dream Machine, the whole thing went from being an engine, wheels and frame to completely finished in a few hours.

I also got a kmph to mph speedo converter that gets rid of that irritating ECU-determined speed restriction. When you look at a bike for sale it's not obvious how many original parts are missing and this is what costs the money. I stopped counting how much I spent at about £1500, as it was depressing. That said, many of the original bits were there, such as a near-perfect silencer and radiator, which are specific to the 3TJ2.

At the time of writing I still need to set up the suspension and fine-tune the fuelling. I will benefit from a trip to a rolling road and a bit of fiddling. The bike no longer smokes but would benefit from an oil change just to get rid of that build oil.

Do I still feel the same way about it as I did when I was coveting my mate's bike? I will tell you at the end of Steve Cooper's road test next issue! **cmm**

**These things are so special.**

**Finally finished.**






# MAMMOTH PROPORTIONS!







It's old so there were some issues!

## Andy Westlake hunts down what could possibly be the only Münch TTS 1200 in the UK.

WORDS AND PHOTOS: ANDY WESTLAKE

**I**n an age when the across-the-frame four-cylinder motorcycle is almost the norm, it is interesting to know that the first such engine was designed and built in 1923.

Carlo Giannini and Piero Remor built such a powerplant for their Rondine racer but it would take another 45 years before the format found its way onto a street bike. Not as most would assume by Honda and its CB750, but by an odd-looking motorcycle made in Germany carrying the name of Münch on its huge fibreglass petrol tank.

Powered by a one-litre NSU car engine housed in a tubular loop frame it was initially named 'Mammut' or 'Mammoth' in English – a name dropped after a bicycle manufacturer claimed the rights to it – and the German giant would become one of the enduring icons of the motorcycling scene in the late Sixties and early Seventies.

Our imposing test machine was made in 1970 for a customer in Germany and was number 147 to leave the Altenstadt factory of the legendary Friedel Münch. Prior to its arrival in the UK it had undertaken a trans-global trip via Japan and the USA before it was acquired by enthusiast John Ransome in 2000. It is believed to be the only example in the UK and for the owner it was the culmination of a 10-year search for a marque he had been attracted to after he saw a photograph of one in the early 1970s. For its creator, the Mammoth is the representation of his dream to build the perfect motorcycle.

Münch was born in Dorn-Assenheim in February 1927 near to his father's thriving car and motorcycle repair shop and by the age of six he was riding his first motorcycle. He quickly proved he had a natural aptitude towards things mechanical and following the end of the Second World War he joined the family business. In those austere years spare parts were in desperately short supply and the young

German had to resort to much improvisation and lateral thinking to keep customers' bikes running. Such were his skills that Friedel quickly had a reputation of being able to breathe new life into some of the most dilapidated machines that postwar Germany could throw at him.

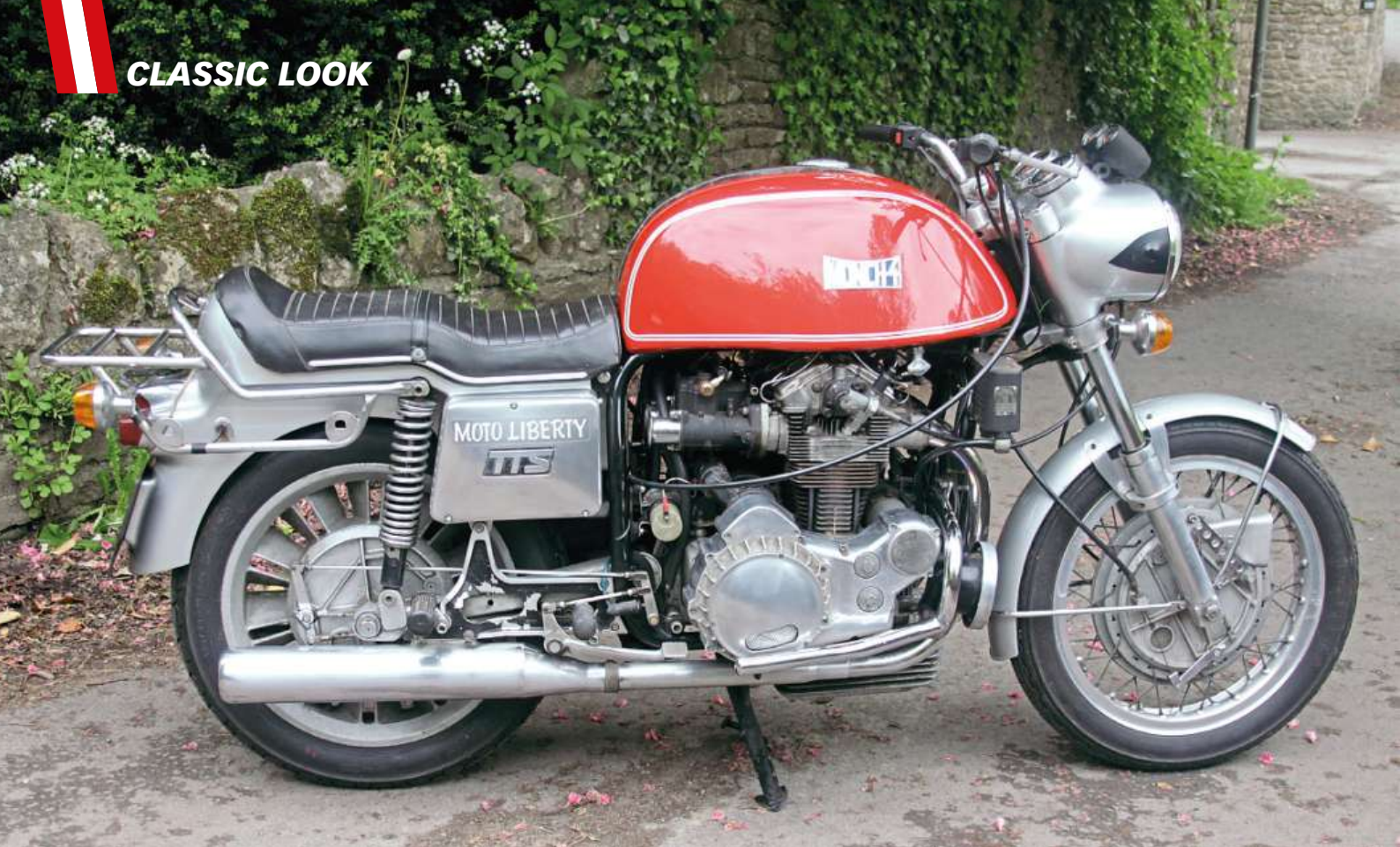
Meanwhile, on the racetracks he was also showing his mettle on a home-brewed 'Münch Spezial'. Constructed from a 500cc Horex 5, an NSU 601 OSL and parts he designed and made himself, the fast and sweet-handling four-stroke was – in its creator's hands – a seriously competitive machine.

Sadly, his own promising race career was cut short following a serious accident at the dangerous Schotten circuit in the early 1950s. However, his tuning skills on the German twins had not gone unnoticed by the Horex factory and in 1954 he joined their competition department, where he stayed for 12 months before rejoining the family concern the following year.

With motorcycle sales on the decline, Horex closed its doors in 1958 and Münch bought all the spare parts and production machinery. By the early Sixties he had taken over his father's business and in 1964 he designed and built the Münch racing brake – a high performance drum brake for street and racing motorcycles.

It had long been Münch's ambition to make a complete motorcycle and this finally came to fruition in 1965, following a visit from a friend driving a new NSU Prinz 1000TT car. His plans for a complete machine had already reached an advanced stage with a rolling chassis built with a frame similar to that of a Norton Featherbed and powered by a modified Horex unit. However, it didn't take too long for Münch to realise that with a few modifications the air and oil-cooled ohc engine in the NSU was ripe for transfer into a motorcycle and by late 1965 a prototype was completed.





**ABOVE:** It's a unique profile, we will say that.

**BELOW:** Even the clocks are big and many!

This was put through its paces by well-known journalist/tester Ernst Leverkus, who was very enthusiastic about the big new four-cylinder superbike and, together with its creator, showed it to the NSU management. They liked what they saw, but although they were not interested in reviving NSU motorcycle production they readily agreed to supply Munch with engines.

This first machine was sold to Jean Murit – a famous French former sidecar road-racer – and by the time the 'Mammoth' had its first public airing at the Cologne show in the autumn of 1966 it was actually Munch's second, and already improved, version. This machine was lauded by the motorcycle press all over the world and within two months of

its launch Munch had received 18 firm orders from enthusiasts wanting to own one.

Munch himself didn't have the financial means to set up any kind of series production but just at the right time the American publisher and former Indian factory racer Floyd Clymer came on the scene. An astute businessman, Clymer acquired the US distribution rights and took charge of the financial operation, leaving his partner Friedel to concentrate on the development of the bikes at the newly-opened factory at Ossenheim.

Employing around 20 people, production was soon under way and in 1967 a total of 30 Munchs were built, with a good share going to the United States. Reports described it as "the biggest, strongest and fastest production bike in the world" and "the motorcycle is as reliable as a car, as fast as a Porsche and as exclusive as a Rolls-Royce".

From November 1967 the powerplant became the new and improved 1200cc NSU unit and other than detail differences it was of a similar specification to John's 1970 bike we see here. While the basic engine block is of NSU manufacture, the oil sump, primary drive, clutch, gearbox and chain case were made from electron at the Schenks foundry in Maulbronn from moulds supplied by Munch. Electron is used primarily in the aviation industry and is both lighter and sturdier than aluminium, though it is susceptible to corrosion and if it is not painted it becomes brittle.

John had been impressed but another 20 years were to elapse before he began searching for one. This initially proved to be very difficult, John says: "From the time I started riding at 16 I've been attracted to quirky and slightly unusual looking machines and there is no doubt that the huge Munch was a very different bike to the British singles and twins I grew up with.







**IN DETAIL:** 1/ Badge gives it all away. 2/ Big engine neatly shoe-horned into the frame. 3/ There's no mistaking when this thing is coming at you. 4/ Clocks do the job, but this could well be the only one you'll see in the UK! 5/ Four-cylinder motor capable of around 90bhp.

"I immediately fell in love with the whole design concept but back in the 1970s the possibility of actually owning one of these bikes was just a dream. However, 20 years down the line I was in a position to turn that dream into reality and I began scanning all sorts of advertising sources to see if I could track one down. Of the 478 bikes made, only 200 or so are now known to exist and of these a collector in Germany owns 30, a Frenchman 18 and 20 more are in a museum in America.

"Once bought people tend not to sell but it was a lucky sighting in the *Old Bike Mart* by my wife Marion that set the ball in motion. Münch number 147 had been bought from its original German owner by Sam Yamashita, who took the bike with him when he moved from Japan to the USA but it had lain unused for some time until a divorce settlement heralded its sale.

"After numerous exchanges of emails and phone calls we agreed on a price and several weeks later a huge crate arrived at our home. This was held together by 597 nails, every one of which was removed by my pal Mike Edwards. He counted them. It had suffered some salt damage during transit from Japan to the USA, but fortunately this was limited to some of the alloy and just required a good clean and the fitting of a replacement ignition switch before we could get it fired up."

The TTS 1200 weighs in at an impressive dry weight of 706lb (321kg) and, viewed from any angle, is a seriously big motorcycle, so it wasn't called a Mammoth without reason! Taking centre stage is the four-cylinder 1200cc engine with its 5 litre electron sump that sits snugly and low in the beautifully crafted frame.

The casings on the near side of the machine are of Münch's own manufacture and hide the duplex chain to the overhead camshaft and the toothed



**John Ransome and his bike: soon to be sold!**





"The engine is instantly responsive from low revs, and the gear selection is positive. But it's a big bike and we did have issues on the day."



**ABOVE:** Munch shortly before he died and (below) doing what he did best. Testing his own creations. Respect!

primary belt that drives a Porsche-engineered clutch through a four-speed gearbox. This, in turn, delivers power to the rear wheel by a chain that runs in a fully enclosed oil bath chain case. This is also made from electron and features a novel adjuster that alters the chain tension without recourse to moving the wheel in the swingarm.

On the offside of the bike is the case that covers the three-phase Bosch alternator borrowed from a BMW car that again is actuated by a toothed belt. Four exhaust pipes exit from the front of the cylinder block before joining into twin silencers. Carburation is by two, twin choke Webbers; ignition is electronic. The rear wheel is again cast from electron with stopping power courtesy of a huge 250mm drum shrunk into the hub ring.



The Münch was the first production bike to feature a cast wheel and this was adopted following tests on the prototypes conventionally spoked variety that proved incapable of handling the NSU's prodigious power output. Also cast from electron was a new rear body section incorporating the mudguard and up-front a headlamp cowl holding a pair of NSU TT car headlights.

In spite of all the magnesium alloy used, the second prototype still tipped the scales at close to 600lb dry (273 kilos) but for the time it had phenomenal performance, taking just 4.5 seconds to reach 60mph and hitting 112mph after 20 seconds.

Friedel Münch was not only a visionary but also a practical motorcyclist and as I discovered a lot of thought had gone into a simple – but often overlooked – operation like rolling it on and off the centrestand – it's one of the easiest I've ever encountered and handy as it is such a heavy bike. Soon it was time for my ride!

In the 15 years John has owned the bike it has had very little use but from cold it was a willing starter and although the oil/air-cooled four was mechanically quite noisy, this was largely drowned out by a purposeful crackle through the pair of low slung silencers – as I sat blipping the throttle I was in no doubt that this was a 'real' motorcycle, despite the origins of the engine.

Not surprisingly, it was quite a stretch across the cavernous petrol tank but all of the controls felt in the right place and the positioning of the footrests





## SPECIFICATION

# MUNCH

## TTS 1200 'MAMMOTH'

### ENGINE

Four-cylinder four-stroke

### DISPLACEMENT

1177cc

### BORE AND STROKE

75x66.6mm

### COMPRESSION RATIO

1:9.2

### COOLING

air/oil

### VALVE ACTUATION

Ohc duplex chain

### CARBURETTORS

Twin Webbers twin choke  
type 40 DCOE 19

### IGNITION

electronic Bosch 3 phase  
12v/400W

### LUBRICATION

Wet sump 5.5 litre SAE 30

### GEARBOX

4-speed

### POWER

88bhp @ 6500rpm

### FRAME

double loop

### FORKS

41.3mm

### SWINGARM

electron casting with oil  
bath chain case, twin shock  
absorbers

### BRAKES

Munch twin leading shoe  
250mm

### TYRES

front 3.25x18 rear 4.00x18

### WEIGHT

706lb

### WHEEL BASE

1410mm

### TOP SPEED

132mph

### PRICE NEW

10,000Dms

afforded a slightly tipped forward riding position. The clutch cable, which had rather an ugly flow to it, was surprisingly light in operation, while the throttle was heavy pulling on the two twin choke Webbers.

The engine, with 30,000km showing on the odometer, was instantly responsive pulling away with little throttle and the gear selection from the four-speed 'box was positive and certain. It was Münch's claim that due to the flexibility of the 88bhp engine it was good for a range of between 25mph to 125mph in top gear, although sadly we were not able to put this to the test. With so little use John had warned me that the front brake was slightly 'grabby' and not wishing to dump his pride and joy most of the speed retardation was achieved using the excellent rear stopper and engine braking.

Suspension is taken care of by 41mm telescopic forks of Münch's own construction at the front and adjustable twin shocks at the rear, which gave a firm but predictable ride with none of the wallowing usually associated with such a heavy machine. Prior to Sam Yamashita buying the bike it had been through the Münch workshop for servicing, so its mechanical history is unknown, but some Mammoths have covered huge mileages before they have required attention.

Friedel Münch was a brilliant engineer, a keen and talented rider (some say he tested all the bikes he manufactured personally) but perhaps not such an astute businessman as his company was to undergo bankruptcy and four takeovers before 1991 when the entire concern was bought by Rolf Damen, Olaf Bruns and Gerhard Hilmer.

It is this company, DBH, that today supplies spares to help rebuilds and restorations for Mammoth owners around the world and keeps the wheels of Friedel Münch's dream and vision alive, as the man himself sadly passed away back in April 2014.

John is justifiably proud of his rare machine and despite my ride being cut short due to a slight problem with the fuel pump, it was a privilege to sample this important and valuable piece of motorcycling history. It's a gem. **cmm**





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# TRIPLE TREAT

Three years in the making and it's love – meet Dave Smith and his passionate restoration of a Suzuki GT380C.

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS PHOTOS: DAVE SMITH







We think the nonstandard pinstripe is lovely!

**I**t's fair to say we love all sorts of restorations at CMM, from those that are so pinpoint and spot on, to those that are simply built to ride again and to hell with the patina.

Dave Smith's loving restoration of this 1978 Suzuki GT380C is somewhere in the middle. It's been done to a very high level and specification, don't doubt that, but it's been done without the over-anal eye that some concours-carbon-copy machines are subjected to. The result is something that is special not just because of the quality of finish, but because of the personalisation and soul that's gone into the build.

"Like many of us, my love of bikes came from when I was a kid growing up in Liverpool," explains Dave. "I was eight miles from the nearest bike shop: James 'Jimmy' Fothergill's in Toxteth and I took a shine to motorcycling from the age of 12. There was nothing untoward about how I got into bikes, but I'm 58 and readers will know that back in the day sometimes youngsters got riding bikes a little too early shall we say. The result was that I knew every back-alley between home and that bike shop so you could keep away from the plod!"

With his first bike a Raleigh Runabout bought for a fiver, the passion grew and a series of shrewd purchases saw him through an RD400 to an XS750. He says: "I had a knack for buying the right bike and making them look better then selling them on. That's pretty much what I did up until I was 17. Really, my world was changed when I saw the Yamaha YAS1 up until then I had a Tiger Cub which I spent more time under, than on!"

The YAS1 had been set on fire – so it was perfect for me! But for me to get it, I needed a tenner for the Tiger Cub. My mate Laurence Smith haggled me to £8 for it. A week doesn't go by now without him messaging me the links to Tiger Cubs on eBay going for between £4000-£6000!"

The YAS1 was something Dave hadn't really seen before – a two-stroke. It was one of 30 bikes

that he was to have when he was a nipper and one which marked a turning point. "I made it into something of a Jap café racer, but I was transfixed by the sound and smell and the performance. We'd never heard the sound or savoured the smell before. That's stayed right with me... although I never had a GT380. I had a GT250 – I loved that.

"Everybody wanted a GT750 but most of us couldn't afford it so the 380 came around probably about the right money."

Fast forward some years to early 2012 and Dave and his mate Steve are on the M5 heading north to Cheshire from Somerset. In the back of a van is the Suzuki GT380C you see in these pictures – albeit in a very sorry state. Dave says: "It was almost fated not to happen, as on the way back a car, with some push-bikes on the roof, had them fall off into the middle lane of the M5 and Steve had to react pretty quickly! I was worried the GT would end up in the cabin we had to brake that hard."

Thankfully it didn't, but it wasn't an auspicious start to their relationship. Also, Dave says: "The Suzuki was the first nut and bolt rebuild I've ever done and it needed serious care and attention. It was in a right mess. To make things more difficult I worked in a shed nowt bigger than 2m by 3m: I call it 'Shedquarters'. At one point over the first few weeks I was working in the shed at minus seven degrees from 7pm to 1am each night."

The initial work was seeing what needed to be done: which was a lot. At each stage Dave would dismantle some assembly and find more work needed to be done. Hence this was going to be a bare-bones resto. Dave said: "I had the frame stove enamelled as I'm more a traditionalist but not a purist! Glad I did as people say stoving tolerates solvents better than powder-coating. I did all the bearings and bushes and the wiring loom as after 40 years this one was brittle and would snap. There were three parts to the loom and one part of it – the bit that feeds the gear indicator on the dash, clock ➡







**Isn't she a beauty? Yes, not all OE, but modern touches add some practicality.**

**"I wanted the guys with the modern bikes to go on ahead, but they liked following the smell of the GT380 way too much!"**

lights etc. – was hard to find so I made it myself and even got the correct marine-style connectors and simply made it from black trailer cable."

One thing Dave didn't want to do was the motor. "Stan Stephens did that," explained Dave. "And I have to take my hat off to him. What a gent he is and his service was beyond first class. He did a standard rebuild, with a new clutch and gearbox, pistons and rebore. I put on an electronic ignition – so it's a brand-new engine really."

While a traditionalist, Dave hasn't gone all-out for OE. "She's had a few aftermarket parts with my approval. The mudguard at the front isn't for this model, but it is £40 not £240! It's got an O-ring chain, too. The decals aren't the proper colour – I liked the original silver base colour but the grey and blue stripes didn't do it justice, so I used pinstripes in gold."

The seat became a challenge – finding someone to do it almost to the spec of the original. Dave explains: "The seat was shot. I could buy a new seat for £330, but I could buy a three-piece suite for that, but I still wanted it done properly. Phil at P&K Classic Bikes did a great job. It's one with a resin base, no holes (where water can run through) and it was £165 delivered! Fantastic! The clocks were damaged on the dial and I was worried that I couldn't get some with backing the same colour. I was quoted £120-£199 EACH for new dials.

Eventually I found a bloke in New York who supplied black decals for the clocks which I got in three days for \$15 – around a tenner.

For Dave other differences from standard were to make the bike safer. He says: "First thing, I wanted as modern a tyre as I could get and the Bridgestone BT45s are fantastic – not square profiled like old tyres. Braided lines help give the brakes some bite.

"Finally, I use the front brake a lot (I ride a 'modern' Yamaha XJR1300 too) and I worried that this GT had no brake light switch on the front lever – only the rear pedal. I found accommodation for such a switch on the lever, but nothing else. I managed to buy one for £1.65! Those finds make you happy, even after shelling out £60 for three rubber gaiters for the carbs!"

Another issue was the headlamp. With modern electronic ignition, Dave was bored of the headlight having '...a main headlight beam the size of a tennis ball...' A simple halogen bulb swap wasn't on the cards as on his model it's a sealed unit, so he had to bite the bullet and buy a new unit from a different model so he could make the swap. He says: "It was £105, but I've kept the original should I want to go back to standard." With the bike half original and half not, what model is it, Dave? "Well, I think it's the C as it has the flush-fit tank filler – but who knows?"

What Dave does know is that this is love. He explains: "Finally she was reborn from Shedquarters





**THE REBUILD:** 1/ This was to be a full, nut and bolt resto. Frame would be stove enamelled. 2/ Carb parts can be hard to come by and expensive. 3/ The GT had been sitting for quite a while. 4/ Fork and front-end was fully refurbished. 5/ Motor effectively brand-new thanks to elbow grease and Stan Stephens. 6/ Clock dial backgrounds cost a tenner from New York. 7/ Headlight poor as standard and a sealed unit! Mudguard a cheaper £40 option.

in 2014 after two years. It was emotional when she fired up second kick. I did 3000 miles on her in that year alone. The amount of pleasure she gives to other people is humbling! She lives next to the cooker in my house. No, I'm not married.

"This bike helps you meet other people who own similar bikes, too. In around March I met a chap from Woodchurch who also had a GT380. We exchanged numbers and some time later he rang me to tell me I was on the news on BBC Wales! And so I was. It was lovely to hear the bike on TV – I love the sound she makes, that crackle from the pipes is priceless. I've been all over North Wales and Cheshire at many events, both VJMC and otherwise. I don't want to work out what I've spent on her – that's not the point – but I've been offered more than I spent on her to sell, which I'm not doing."

Money well spent, we say Dave. "Yes, I love the camaraderie that riding old bikes gives you. Remember when I had the original headlight bulb? Well, there I was riding on the A49 desperately trying to see in the failing light with that awful standard bulb. Behind me were bikers on more modern machinery – if only they would go in front and light my way! Six of them, stuck behind me. By the time we got to well-lit roads they came alongside me at some traffic lights and admitted they didn't want to overtake as they were so enjoying the smell and the noise. That's what makes it special!" **cmm**



Mudguard not correct, but £40 – not £240!



**HONDA** SL & CL 350 TWINS

# IDENTICAL TWIN?

Non-identical twins often have totally different characters and this pair is no different. Their DNA may be similar but their manners are totally different.





**T**o the casual observer these two machines are ostensibly very similar. Both are sohc Honda twins of the late Sixties or early Seventies, both nominally 350ccs and both seem to be intended for off-road use. Knobbly tyres, braced bars and purposeful looks only serve to reinforce the illusion that these are two Seventies trailies hewn from the same block of Honda billet.

However, look a little deeper and the reality is remarkably different – they're similar yet they're analogues not homologues, related but not identical, comparable yet disparate. Welcome to the world of profligate niche marketing.

The primary purpose of making motorcycles is to generate a profit, so it makes perfect sense to make as many as reasonably possible and share common parts or platforms. It's not a new concept and yet the Japanese honed and refined the concept to make it an art form.

Honda's approach here went a little like this: Come up with a successor for the hugely successful, if costly to produce, CB72/77 250/305 twins, make it cheaper to manufacture with higher profit margins and ensure the greatest commonality of parts possible. The clever bit is to get the sales and marketing department to come up with competitor

analysis, future trends and possibly a little lateral thought and see how far you can push the model(s).

The result was five models from one design. Road going bikes as per the well-known CB250/350K range, street scramblers a la CL250/350 and a genuine dirt bike capable of being used competitively in the guise of the SL350. Choose your markets carefully, promote as appropriate and watch the cash roll in. The fact that the end products make different people smile is almost a secondary effect, but enough clinical analysis and cynicism, what's on offer?

Here, running a pair of high rise pipes on its left hand side is arguably one of Japan's best slices of early 1970s eye-candy, a Honda CL350K5 and the last of the line. Built to grab attention at every available opportunity it's a bike aimed fairly and squarely at the American customers who genuinely wanted style over ability.

Sitting in the late summer sun our test example looks a million dollars. We also have here the rarer SL350 with a subtle but distinctively more focused look to it. It's noticeably more skeletal in profile and possibly not the instant crowd collector that is the street scrambler, but it still looks intriguing. Let's have a closer look at both.







#### IN DETAIL:

- 1/ Basic exhaust suits privateer off-roader. Can be bashed back into shape.**
- 2/ Hence the minimalist clocks.**
- 3/ Model-specific frame downtubes hide motor tuned for torque and geared for outright grunt.**

Before we get carried away with what the CL and SL are like on the road, remember this: Any comparison will always come back to the CB350K; it's the benchmark simply because it's the most well-known and popular. Crawl around the CL and it all seems very familiar if you know your earlier Hondas. To the casual observer the exquisite street scrambler could have been made any time between the late 1960s and late Seventies. Honda's well-known drive to produce cars dictated its bikes remained grounded and based around well-established principles and components.

No risk taking, no pushing the envelope, no rash development, just subtle tweaks and considered upgrades. If the CB twins didn't exactly progress then they didn't decline either. Honda had made its reputation on making quality products at sensible prices and it shows on Richard Robinson's fantastic example. Quality panels, simple functional clocks, logically laid out switchgear, substantial brakes and classy grey control cables, all borrowed from the roadster.

If Honda wasn't giving anything away free it certainly wasn't scrimping either. And as the CL was all about image there's acres of chrome as well. That exhaust obviously takes pride of place but the headlamp brackets also get some in place of candy paint. There are some CL-specific components as well once you start digging – the front mudguard looks like little else and presumably was made for the street scrambler.

In-keeping with the image, the fork legs get their own rubber gaiters to give a hint of dirt capability even if only the brave, rich or foolhardy would really chance their luck off-piste. Likewise, the seat is probably model specific and check out those strange little L-shaped brackets for the rear indicators. They're most likely necessary so that the exhaust can clear the left hand unit. Okay, so the CL350 might very well be a CB350 in a posh frock, but there's little dispute that it scrubs up rather well.

By comparison, the SL350 is, initially at least, almost the Cinderella act. Substantially less ostentatious than the CL, its restrained looks and almost anorexic proportions are potentially a little off-putting, at least until you do the history. What we have here is an off-road, privateer, competition machine. It is a motorcycle aimed at winning on the dirt and with a fair degree of competency. It is potentially rather difficult to make comparisons against anything vaguely contemporary simply because the SL grabs a middle ground few even knew existed.

The bike was down a level from serried ranks of full-on Spanish machines being sold in the States at the time but confusingly a notch above the first generation trail bikes: typical of Honda to do their own thing. Know that a mildly modified SL350 won its class in the Baja 100 and be impressed; they were genuinely that good. The SL borrows some of its motive DNA from our benchmark CB350 but precious little else. Check out that twin down tube frame, it's unique to the bike, minimalist and there's no provision for pillion pegs.

The fuel tank is tiny in comparison to the CL's and SL specific, ditto the panels and seat, guards and of course that exhaust system, which provides another clue to the bike's *raison d'être*. You don't make



## Eric Peake's SL

The CL350 in camera was bought to be used and not treated as a polished and preened show pony. Owner Eric Peake acquired the CL some 13 years ago when he decided he wanted something a little easier to ride as he got older. Having ridden pretty much most of the contemporary stuff throughout his riding career, he finds the Honda's seat height and lower mass ideal as he continues to ride into his 80s.

The bike is obviously an American import (the SL never came here officially) and was purchased from an enthusiast for £800 in need of a respray and a big-end bearing. The only obvious deviation from standard is the lid to the toolbox, which is currently a craftily reworked baked bean can. The original went AWOL while out riding and was never found but amazingly the OEM tools were found lying in the road the next day!







## The SL350 history: the stopgap scrambler

When Yamaha stirred it all up back in 1968 with the DT1 250 trail bike the future of motorcycling took a very specific and divergent turn. The days of making a half-hearted attempt at an off-roader were over.

Honda's immediate response was actually little more than a papering-over-the-cracks exercise; it might even be seen as a cynical effort. The first SL350 really was little more than a CB350 in a pretty summer outfit. The bike's mass at 364lb (165kg) meant it was still far too heavy for its intended purpose: Honda arguably still hadn't quite grasped what a trail bike actually was and was still too focused on the desert sled side of things as successfully capitalised on by the big Brit twins.

The CB's geometry meant that the 'new' SL had too much understeer on fast bends and the power came in a little too hard

at 5000rpm. The bike was okay but not exactly what the market wanted; there was too much CB about the bike; it even retained the roadster's electric start. However, there were two facets of the SL350 Motorsport that everyone seemed to love; the looks were stunning and the saddle was one of the most comfortable ever.

With customer feedback taken on board, Honda's 1970 offering was an altogether better machine. If the SL350 K1 wasn't a totally all-new machine it was pretty damn close. The heavy single down tube frame had been dropped in favour of a purpose-built lightweight twin down tube chassis; this helped drop weight by an astonishing 60lb (27kg). Smaller slide carbs had replaced the previous 30mm CV units, which had had a nasty habit of slamming shut when landing from higher jumps

– never the ideal scenario on the dirt! The electric foot was also dropped.

A heavily revised camshaft allowed for maximum torque to be delivered at a much more reasonable 6000rpm and although the peak power had dropped from a claimed 33 to 25bhp the motor was much more usable. Revised frame geometry, increased trail, redesigned forks and different shocks all contributed to make the K1 the bike the K0 should have been.

Smaller diameter brakes more in-keeping with the bike's intended use pretty much completed the upgrade and Honda was onto a winner. There were a host of minor revisions in 1972, including the fitment of a 21in front wheel in place of the previous 19in unit, revised paintwork and the adoption of anodised alloy guards in place of the previous painted ones.



This, the K2, was the end of the line for the SL350. Honda had taken a longer term view and realised that it was simply not viable to run an essentially compromised design based on a road bike in a rapidly expanding market sector. Late 1972 saw the launch of the purpose-made XL250 Motorsport. This single re-established the genre that had pretty much died out during the death throes of the British bike industry and arguably it would lead to such ground-changing dirt bikes as the seminal Yamaha XT500.



## Richard Robinson's CL

Amazingly, the CL350 is almost exactly as it left the factory. Other than fresh rubber and a new rear rim due to the kinked original, this one's a true restorer's reference. With circa 6000 miles on the clock the bike had been parked up for 30 years and never messed with. Once the crusty remains of the fuel tank had been cleaned out and the seized carbs cleaned and freed up this snapshot in time fired up third press of the button on some fresh oil and new battery. The only issue has been an occasional hiccup traced to some hidden crud in one of the carbs, other than that it's been the archetypal paragon of virtue.



## The CL350 History: the rise and fall of the street scrambler

Honda never missed a trick. So, even before replacement of the CB77, there was a scheme in place to run the new 350 in at least two different guises or formats. Stateside, the 350 capacity bracket was serious business. It offered better all-round usability than a 250 with little weight penalty, had exploitable power and torque and was equally capable around town or travelling longer distance. Knowing that a very substantial amount of Honda's late 1960s and early 1970s profit came from the 350 twins, it all falls into place.

Style sells in the USA and the launch of the new 350s in 1968 saw both roadsters and street scrambler versions. The latter came after the success of desert sled racing that began in the late 1940s. By the time the

major factories bought into the concept of producing commercial versions there was already a strong sub-culture of home-based builders modifying road bikes to emulate their local heroes.

Just like the Brits building racetrack escapee café road racers, our Yank cousins did the same but they were dirt orientated. So the Japanese just built the most complete street scrambler they could to save everyone the hassle. Honda's CL350 ran the entire lifespan of the CB350 from K0 to K5 and went through numerous aesthetic revisions but with few serious mechanical or technical upgrades.

Arguably, the best compromise of the bigger CL twins, the 350, occupied a logical middle ground between the arguably underpowered CL250 and

the bulkier CL450. The last year of the CL350 was 1973, before the arrival of the new and revised 360G5 models.

The new, bigger, engine replacement ran from 1974-1976 but the CL360 failed to sell in the same volumes as the previous model. In reality even the

last iterations of the CL350 hadn't sold as fast as they once used to; the allure of the street scrambler had faded. Maybe it was just environmentalism, but desert sleds had had their day and by default so had the street scramblers that had aped them.







1



2



3



4

#### IN DETAIL:

**1/** Motor aims for top-end performance as befits a road bike.

**2/** Basic and simple clock architecture.

**3/** Twin, 'scrambler' upswept chrome pipes climb the left-hand side of the bike.

**4/** Suspension is a tad bouncy and underdamped.

an exhaust especially for a bike that's going to sell in lower volume unless it adds something. In this instance the two-into-two set-up must, presumably, offer the best compromise between weight, performance and noise. Whatever the reason, there's no arguing that it looks damn funky.

The brakes are smaller for reduced mass, the forks are obviously competition orientated and the more you look the less unessential ephemera you see. The bike is part 350 twin hybrid, part stopgap model, and of course, a full-on Honda.

### The ride

The CL350 is first out of the blocks today and the experience is pure and essential Japanese four-stroke twin. Fuel and choke on, check the kill switch and push the starter button. A quick chuck-chuck-whir and it's away. Of course, I could have kicked it over to get it running but somehow that inbuilt civility of a self-starter is too tempting. The two pipes down the left hand side aren't intrusive in terms of noise or positioning.

By way of comparison, Yamaha's bigger street scramblers and indeed Bridgestone's diminutive Hurricane 175 twin are substantially more invasive in terms of leg space and ergonomics. The CL350 seems to be a fairly cold motor and requires a proper warm-up before it can be used in earnest, but once there's some hot blood running through its heart it's a real game old stager.

The ongoing analogy regarding the CB350 roadster is spot-on here – the CL feels very much like a high-barred, upright CB, which is kind of what you'd honestly expect.

What does surprise is the way the bike steers. It responds faster to inputs than you might expect. Possibly it's the influence of those wide braced bars but to be honest it seems unlikely. Just a little movement has the bike responding sharply. Unable to find verifiable data on rake and trail it's hard to say whether there is any essential difference between CB and CL geometries. One facet of the CL that comes over as slightly odd is the suspension, which is rather bouncy and underdamped. Perhaps it's just a foible of the CL? My CB350 roadster experiences didn't reveal the same traits.

In terms of carburation, the CL350 is fitted with a set of CV carbs the same or very similar to the CB's and as such the bike can, initially, seem to have a slightly jerky nature. However, once you recalibrate your brain to the fact that you're riding a smaller twin with a 180° crank it all comes together very easily and the benefits of the CV carb are shown in the precise fuelling and a modest thirst.

The bike pulls hard from a standing start and also out of the bends, providing the revs are maintained.

Like all the genre, Honda's twins need to be revved. The brakes on the CL are as good as or better than you'd expect, but with two caveats. Firstly, the front twin-leading shoe unit wouldn't be the weapon of choice if you did take the CL off-road; the same as the CB350 it'd be far too potent on loose surfaces. And the rear brake is both amazingly powerful and sensitive. If you're ham-footed, a full speed, rear-end, broadside, dirt showering rooster is on the cards.

On to the SL and it's amazing just how different two engines can be. Retuned for torque rather than outright performance, it delivers its power in an altogether singular manner. It's not slow, just different. Whereas the CL is a full-fat mochachino, the SL is a skinny latte. It's so utterly chuckable around bends and the single, superbly comfortable sloping saddle, the wide bars and the position of the foot pegs just make you want to explore its limits.

The most obvious limit is top speed. The final gearing is set up for off-road use when some low-down stomp is required and so the SL runs out of puff far too early for a road bike. If you had the requisite, inevitable spares and the owner's permission you could have a truly belting day on the dirt with the SL. It's easy-going nature means slow





## HONDA SL & CL 350 TWINS

or medium speed work would be easily rewarding and if you did stall or fall off, starting wouldn't be an issue – stone cold or red hot the bike remained a first-kick starter.

Later off-road bikes tend to be a little too focused for the layman but you can see how and why the SL found huge favour with riders of all capabilities when it was new. Those smaller brakes are fantastically progressive and effective, the slide carbs fuel impeccably, and the tickover is Swiss-watch reliable. If it truly was Honda's mission to make viceless motorcycles then amazingly and against the odds it achieved it with the off-road SL350.

### Conclusion

The inevitable question would have to be – given all three sohc 350 Honda twins to choose from, which one would it be? On paper you'd probably be hard pushed to make an honest call between the CB350K roadster and the CL350 Street Scrambler. According to the brochures they make 36 and 33bhp respectively with just a few em-pee-aitch and a fraction of a second between them. The CL is 7lb lighter.

The SL350, following its hasty and major late 60s rework, has just 25bhp to play with and although it's substantially lighter, it still doesn't have the legs to ace the CL in terms of outright performance. If you like the style, presence and panache of the utterly gorgeous CL then little is likely to sway you from your chosen path.

If you want practical then the CB350K would be the weapon of choice. More than anything it would come down to riding position versus looks. The genuinely more focused SL350 could quite



Signature pipes aren't obtrusive or over-loud.

easily be sidelined for being less potent, more dirt focused and possibly less desirable. But wait, a reasonable number of SL350s have found their way back to Blighty and have very quickly been fettled to revise the final drive ratio.

With a little less off-road pep and hence longer legs the bike really does become a genuine 350 contender for widespread classic use. Take into account that amazingly comfortable saddle and it makes for a very torquey, user-friendly, classic with some true off-road bragging rights.

So which one would we ultimately go for? That'd probably depend on which way the wind is blowing – they're all equally immensely capable machines that regularly get overlooked. **cmm**

### SPECIFICATION

## HONDA 350 SL/CL

#### CONFIGURATION

Air-cooled, 4-stroke, dohc, twin 4 valves per cylinder

#### DISPLACEMENT

325cc

#### GEARBOX

5-speed (1D-4U)

#### BORE X STROKE

64mm x 50.6mm

#### COMPRESSION RATIO

9.5:1

#### MAX HP

33bhp @ 9500rpm/25bhp @ 8500rpm

#### CARBURETION

2 x Keihin CV/ 2 x Keihin slide

#### IGNITION

Points & C coil

#### TYRES

3.00x19 (F) 3.50x18 (R) / 3.25x19 (F) 4.00x18 (R)

"Which would you choose? The road-going CL Scrambler or dirt-oriented SL? Both are immensely capable machines that regularly get overlooked."








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# RETURN OF THE MACK!

More than 30 years have passed since **Niall Mackenzie's** first Pro-Am podium. Could he get another?

WORDS: NIALL MACKENZIE, DARYLL YOUNG

PHOTOS: MARK 'WEEBLE' MANNING, HARRY PARVIN AND BONNIE LANE



Family Mackenzie: Jan, Taylor, Niall and Tarran.



The line-up of Pro-Am bikes.





The calm before the storm.

**I**n the spring of this year Daryll Young from IDP Moto and Chris Herring from The Circuit of Wales, were (in my opinion) positively fantasising about reviving the greatest ever one-make race championship, the Yamaha Pro-Am Series.

The connection came from the 2015 and 2016 Moto GP event, which is hosted by the Circuit of Wales at Silverstone. Chris – an ex sports journo and former top PR man with Honda – was keen to have a support race to create some fresh interest from our sector of the market. IDP Moto are a first-class specialist bike builders based at Silverstone with fond memories of the Pro-Am (Daryll also owned one and raced one) so were keen to be involved.

I agreed to meet up with Chris in early May with a view to helping and although I'm generally a great optimist, I really thought this was an impossible dream. I turned up at the meeting and asked three basic questions. Firstly, finding and restoring one LC in three months is a huge task so how the hell could 24 be sourced and fettled in such a short time? Secondly, where would funding come from and finally how could you possibly get so many riders' race licences sorted when they hadn't raced for a least 20 years?

The answers I was given blew me away but at the same time I left totally committed to the project believing we could make it happen. Why? Firstly, an incredible enthusiast Mark Lowther from MSCM had already sourced and bought around 30 250 and 350 LCs from all around Europe and they were already

en route to IDP Moto. Along with Silverstone, Circuit of Wales, Bennetts Bike Insurance and Yamaha had agreed to fund the project providing that it was all delivered on time. Finally, providing the riders could prove that they had genuinely raced in the past, an ACU licence would be issued similar to the system used at the Goodwood Revival Event. With all these pieces in place, it was just a simple case of getting 24 bikes ready for August...

From that day on we all went to work, doing what we could in a very small time frame to deliver 24 bikes and riders to the grid for the British Grand Prix on August 30.

I tracked down riders and a few extra sponsors including oil giant Motul (these are Elsie's we are talking about!) while Chris worked on the organisation and the more serious part of financing it all. I want to make one thing clear though, without Daryll and Craig Prior at IDP Moto, working tirelessly (and with many 24 hour shifts) restoring the bikes, we would never have made it to the grid. The trouble was these 30-year-old bikes ranged from decent runners to complete barn-find, basket cases, but they all had to have full nut and bolt restorations.

Although the original Pro-Am Series was 350s we decided it would be easier to make all the bikes 250s. One reason was we were short of front discs so going with the single disc 250LC model saved a lot of hassle. Every frame, swingarm and associated parts had to be powder coated, wheels had to be refurbished, tanks had to be sealed and painted, ➡

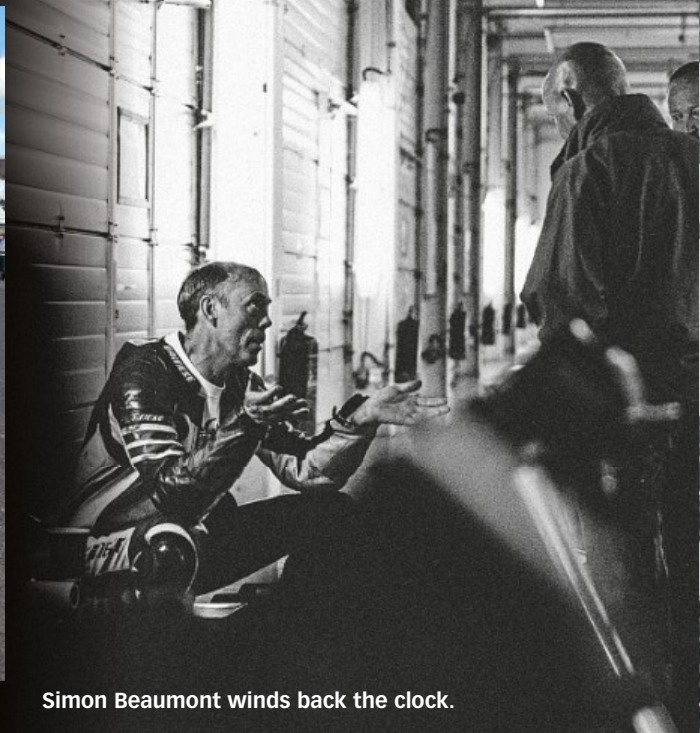


Memories are made of this.





The scary line-up!



Simon Beaumont winds back the clock.

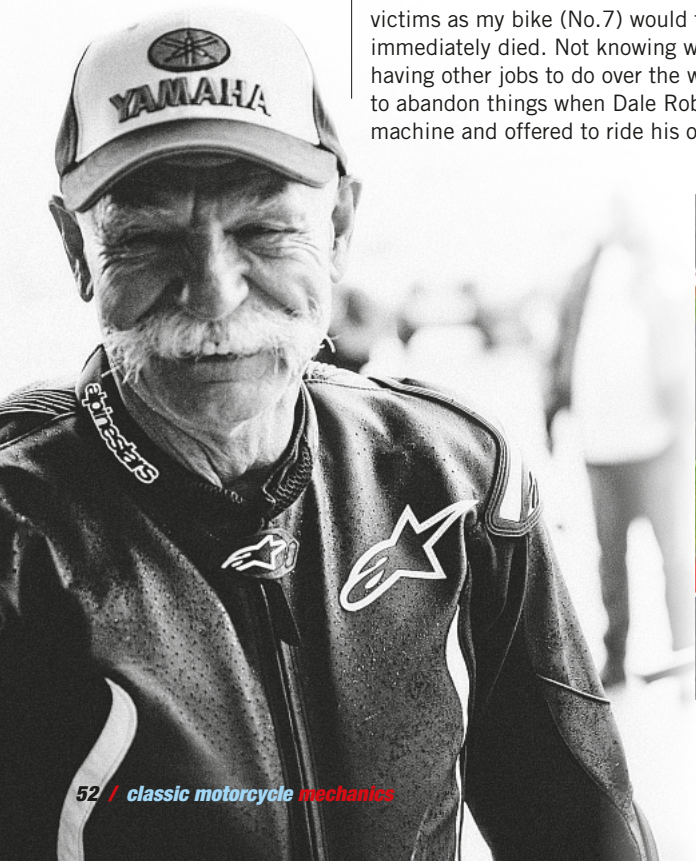


plastics replaced, every engine had to be completely rebuilt with new cranks, bearings, clutches and pistons and all the brake systems were replaced with brand-new components. It was an enormous task given the time frame and a huge ask for the small companies being bombarded with our urgent requests. I could fill pages with the headaches involved for the team but miraculously 24 bikes were ready for the Friday launch of the GP. Just to add to the drama, Craig from IDP Moto ended up in hospital with a broken leg on the Wednesday leading up to the GP after riding home completely knackered in the early hours and having a spill.

So the launch took place with 24 beautiful bikes and the 'keys out of the hat' ceremony took place with Yamaha racing boss Lin Jarvis from Yamaha doing the honours. Unfortunately there was still much work to do as we had lots of bikes refusing to run properly due to ignition problems and contaminated carburettors. I was one of the victims as my bike (No.7) would fire up but then immediately died. Not knowing what to do and having other jobs to do over the weekend I was ready to abandon things when Dale Robinson sacrificed his machine and offered to ride his own bike in the race.

Unfortunately, his wasn't much better but I was again incredibly lucky when my old friend and rival Donnie McLeod decided a racing comeback wasn't for him so handed over his bike that ran perfectly: third time lucky for me due to some incredible Scottish generosity.

Now, let me tell you that contrary to paddock gossip I have never tested an LC at Silverstone but the qualifying session went well with me qualifying on pole just in front of Andy Muggleton's very sweet-running machine. Admittedly, I did have a few moments as I pushed harder but mainly with the basic suspension that couldn't cope with the very excellent Continental Classic Attack tyres. I felt for some of the guys still having problems but mostly for Kim Barker and Steve Chambers who were black flagged for smoking exhausts: turns out there was nothing wrong, they just happened to be two-strokes running a bit rich! Perhaps this modern breed of marshal needs to watch a few two-stroke races on YouTube? The Saturday was free so the incredible camaraderie continued as everyone helped each other to ready their bikes for the race. The helpful Silverstone people also gave us some extra practice on the short Stowe circuit which was very much



Left and above: Dek Crutchlow, dad of Cal.





appreciated and also big fun around the smaller, tighter track.

And so to race day, and a Silverstone GP reminiscent of the 1980s when the heavens opened! I'm not sure about the others and although in pole position I lined up on the grid thinking, why the hell did I agree to this, I was terrified! Anyway the lights went out and I got away cleanly but still expecting a big challenge from Corner, Geoff Crust, Curt Langan, Dave Heal, Chambers, Barker, Muggleton and Co.

Turns out there was chaos unfolding behind me on the slippery track, and in typical Pro-Am style there were bikes and bodies going everywhere.

I had a quick look round after a lap and could see a nice gap, so I kept my head down until I got to the flag. My last Pro-Am victory was over 32 years ago so I thought a 'tumble the monkey' celebration on the

Wellington straight was necessary, as I parked up my Elsie and did a forward roll in my leathers in front of the crowd. Beat that Valentino! It made me laugh and embarrassed my kids so it was a fine end to an amazing weekend.

I cannot thank everyone enough for their hard work leading up to Silverstone as they made it happen. This of course starts with IDP Moto and Chris Herring but also to everyone that helped out over the weekend. I'm also eternally grateful to Mark Lowther, Yamaha and Bennetts, but also to Continental Tyres, Motul, EBC Brakes, JT Sprockets, Venhill and Oakley plus everyone involved along the way. Sorry, I sound like a racer again don't I? One thing I will say is that we will be back! Who knows, you may see 24 LCs smoking and barging their merry way at a track close to you in 2016. **cm**

**Mackenzie wins, from Charlie Corner, and Andy Muggleton.**

Charlie Corner.







## "It almost killed me..."

Spare a thought to CMM-friend Darryll Young. He helped put 24 bikes out there and was the man who would get the criticism if anything went wrong. Here's his take on the herculean effort it took to re-create the Yamaha Pro-Am series.

"This was a big effort, by a few people. Firstly a big shout out to Shropshire-based Yamaha RD Breakers and Andy Jones – he sourced all the bikes for us with one phone call. It was amazing what he's done. Overall, if I'm honest we shouldn't have been able to make this happen – to put 24 bikes that were 35 years old on the grid and each looking like a full, professional restoration. You need a year to do it: we did it in eight weeks. Yamaha helped big time, but the parts they supplied only turned up two weeks before the race, so the engine work was started then. Then, things like gaskets, throttle cables etc. didn't arrive until the Monday before the race. So we had more than 20 bikes needing engine rebuilds done THAT week.

"Reliability was an issue all weekend and we were always going to have issues. Carb problems were the biggest ones. We lost control a little as everyone mucked in with spannering their own bikes. One rider chased his tail as he picked up a stator from the spares box which another rider had dumped there as it was knackered. Despite this, I want to thank the riders as they mucked in. Geoff Crust – ex Marlboro Yamaha team boss, Geoff Fowler, Curt Langan, every one of them helped out on the Thursday, putting decals on the bikes and suchlike – it had a real club-race feel.

"I couldn't watch the races as I was worried reliability would be an issue. After lap one I heard that we didn't have 23 or even 20 bikes coming around, so I was gutted. I had no idea that, because of the conditions, eight had crashed on the first lap. We had three mechanical problems in the race, one that could have been caused by the rider and his mechanic working on the bike, and the other two we think were water ingress. As for the crashes, well, some of our guys hadn't raced for 20 years and even the Red Bull Rookies previously were crashing on the warm-up lap as there was standing water on the track. In fact, this meant the organisers were considering not letting the Pro-Am take place. Maybe next time we will have full wets?

"If there are any lessons for any prospective RD250LC restorers out there, I'd say this: give yourself plenty of time! We didn't. Carburation was the

biggest issue without a doubt. Some items on the bikes were so old, for example the pins that hold the floats in: some were 90,000km old and they had gone oval. We used pattern ones, but they would drop out as other parts were so worn. You'll also need to be quick to get that olive drab finish on certain parts. We used Redditch Shot Blasting for the zinc plating, and they say you won't be able to get that much longer as I think the chemical they use will be banned from next year. Another lesson: you will spend more money on your restoration than anticipated if you want them running perfectly. We've realised that our budget wasn't enough!

"I've lived and breathed this for the last few months and as a result my business, IDP Moto, has suffered, so I need some customers now as we've had to turn our normal service work away while doing this. Thankfully, on the back of this we have four 350LC restorations to do, and another guy wants a Pro-Am replica built. We hope this was the start of something. This winter we can fettle them and be out there in 2016, maybe with wets, rewind stators and the tanks sealed again! It's a fantastic package we can take all over Europe. Sure, we had a few disappointed riders with the mechanical issues, a couple had a strop or two, but they all came back and shook my hand and said they all want to do it again. Now I'm turning my attention back to the Retro Reboot RD350LC. You'd think I'd be sick of the things, but I owned one and raced one and still love 'em!"



Niall and Darryll.



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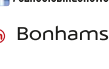
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# 1975 **JAWS** **& BRILL BIKES**

It's a year that will always be remembered for a film about a giant man-eating shark and some marvellous motorcycles. **John Nutting** pulls on his Speedos and dives in...



WORDS: JOHN NUTTING PHOTOS: JOHN NUTTING, MORTONS.







**H**alfway through the Seventies, the motorcycle world had become accustomed to superbikes as part of the established order. Honda's CB750 and Kawasaki's Z1, both four-stroke fours with blistering performance, were the bikes to beat. Rival factories had tried to offer challengers, but in the minds of the masses, nothing came close.

It had seemed like the bike industry was in a state of limbo, not helped in a world dominated by uncertainty created by the war in Vietnam and Middle East conflict. Rising fuel prices dented the marketing of any vehicle with sporting aspirations.

Fun was a dirty word – unless it was derived from watching the blockbusters of the age, such as *Jaws*, about a killer shark. But behind the scenes at the bike factories, changes were on the way.

It all came to a head in 1975, four decades ago this year, when a rush of new machines appeared that would again change the way we viewed motorcycling. The bikes arrived from three groups of manufacturers, in Japan, Europe and here in the UK. In Japan, Honda, Suzuki and Yamaha were rising to meet Kawasaki's ascendancy; in Europe, BMW, Ducati, Laverda and Moto Guzzi would provide new levels of performance and class, while in the UK, the British factories would emit one last gasp in an attempt to keep up on level terms.

After Honda had launched its sizzling CB750 in 1968 on the back of overwhelming racing success in the previous five years, subsequent models such as the CB500 Four and CB350 Four proved to be refined tourers more than road burners. By 1973, even the CB750 had lost its fizz. But once Honda's range of automobiles had been launched and the car and motorcycle divisions were separated its motorcycle engineers could concentrate on what they thought best. And at the Cologne Show in

**If there was a more handsome, clean-lined machine than the 400-Four, we've yet to see it.**

the autumn of 1974 we saw the fruits of their efforts: the sporty CB400 Four and the Gold Wing flat-four tourer.

The CB400 Four was based on the 350cc four-cylinder model with a complete makeover in engineering and more importantly, style. Capacity was upped to 408cc and six-speeds were provided in a package featuring a racy plain fuel tank, a trim seat and a four-into-one exhaust system.

Gerald Davison, who in 1974 was senior manager at Honda UK and had taken on responsibility for product development, recalls the machine: "The 400 Four was introduced at the beginning of one of the most imaginative periods at Honda R&D. They had not long had independence after the separation of car and motorcycle development after a fairly fallow period while resources had been rather concentrated on car development. All of the bike's success was down to the riding experience and value it gave riders looking for a small four-stroke sports bike."

I first tested the bike early in 1975 and was impressed by its smoothness, refinement and 100mph-plus performance, I knew it would be a hit with British riders. And the CB400 Four still is one of the most popular classic motorcycles.

I wasn't initially so convinced by the Gold Wing. Leaked stories had suggested that Honda's first 1000cc offering would be a performance machine to challenge the Z1, but the huge liquid-cooled GL1000 was more like a two-wheel car. It weighed in at massive 650lb, or 295kg, some 100lb more than BMW's R90S launched a year earlier. ➡

**"After a time of uncertainty and rising fuel prices, a rush of new machines appeared that would change the way we viewed motorcycling. 1975 would be a great year."**





## SPECIFICATION

### DUCATI 860G

#### ENGINE

864cc ohc V-twin, five-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

57bhp at 7000rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1530mm

#### WEIGHT

236kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

114.2mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

13.55s/97.95mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

39mpg



## SPECIFICATION

### NORTON 850 COMMANDO MK3

#### ENGINE

828cc ohv parallel-twin, four-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

58bhp at 5900rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1448mm

#### WEIGHT

204kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

114.5mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.4s/93.39mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

45mpg



Had Honda's engineers lost the plot? As I commented in *Motor Cycle*: "Being little more than the [home-made] Volkswagen-BMWs we often see pulling sidecars at rallies, it does little to raise the standards of motorcycle design." But as a sports bike fan I had missed the point. When the Gold Wing was offered for test rides at the Isle of Man TT in 1975 I continued to criticise its weight and unwieldiness. It was only after an extended tour around the Pennines did the penny drop and the Gold Wing's breathless mile-eating capability show its true character.

Four decades on and Honda's vision of a luxurious two-wheel touring platform that raised comfort and load capacity to unprecedented levels has been more than vindicated. In America especially the Gold Wing alone created a long-distance lifestyle. Worldwide almost 700,000 Gold Wings have been sold with other factories offering machines with similarly lavish specifications at price tags that in 1975 we would have thought incomprehensible.

Rival Suzuki's engineers took a completely different route. As masters of two-stroke technology they thought that the Wankel rotary engine was key to future success, offering smoothness and simplicity. But it didn't work out that way and with the RE5 launched at the end of 1973 project team leader Shigeyasu Kamiya threw in every possible complexity to iron out the engine foibles. With styling by Italian designer Giorgetto Giugiaro it looked amazing.

When I tested the 1975 model, it was as expected an amazingly smooth touring machine, but it was also heavy and thirsty with fuel. At a time when petrol prices had jumped by a quarter in a year, the 30-40mpg consumption was disastrous. Neither was the performance impressive, with a top speed of 110mph and acceleration no better than Suzuki's own GT550 two-stroke triple. But the RE5 was an impressive, if ill-timed and conceived, statement. Lucky for Suzuki, the factory had other irons in the fire and by 1976 had launched a new range of four-strokes topped by the GS750 four.

At Yamaha, four-stroke engine development had been continuing since 1970, and for 1975 the



latest offering for the UK market was the exotic XS500B, a 180° balanced twin with an eight-valve dohc cylinder head. But for ground-shaking drama, Yamaha's launch of the XT500 trail bike with a four-stroke single-cylinder engine to dealers in America was the hot tip. The 500cc single struck a chord with off-road riders with its compact unit construction, chain driven overhead camshaft and easy-starting features. Since then the motor has provided a platform for all manner of dirt bikes, and has, in its SR400 road going form proved to be one of the longest running bikes in production.

In contrast Kawasaki had a quiet year in 1975, with its phenomenal Z1 morphing into the less frenetic Z900, whose top speed of 125mph (as tested at MIRA), was well down on the 131mph originals from 1972. But Kawasaki wasn't asleep, because the finish touches were being applied to the Z650 four, which would blitz the middleweight class in 1976.

The bike factories in Italy meanwhile were emerging from their home-market focus. So rather than new machines being launched for a particular

## SPECIFICATION

### HONDA CB400 FOUR

#### ENGINE

408cc ohc inline four, six-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

37bhp at 8500rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1355mm

#### WEIGHT

175kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

104mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.9s/87.27mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

N/A



## SPECIFICATION

### LAVERDA 3C-E

#### ENGINE

981cc dohc inline triple, five-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

75bhp at 7600 rpm (at rear wheel)

#### WHEELBASE

1486mm

#### WEIGHT

232kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

133.3mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

12.7s/107.7mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

40mpg



## SPECIFICATION

### MOTO GUZZI 750-S3

#### ENGINE

748cc ohv V-twin, five-speed, shaft drive

#### PEAK POWER

70bhp at 7000rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1500mm

#### WEIGHT

206kg dry

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

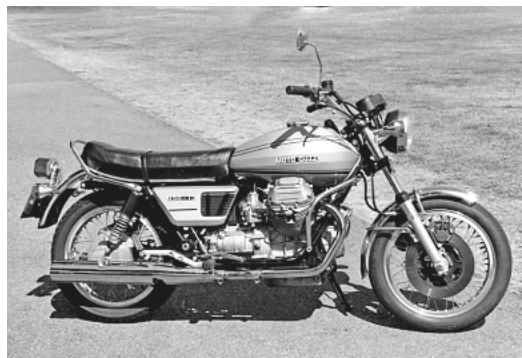
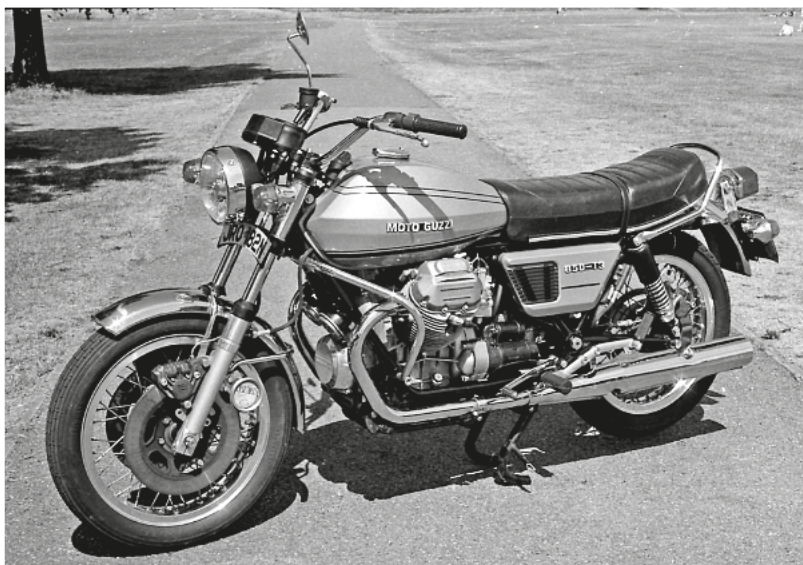
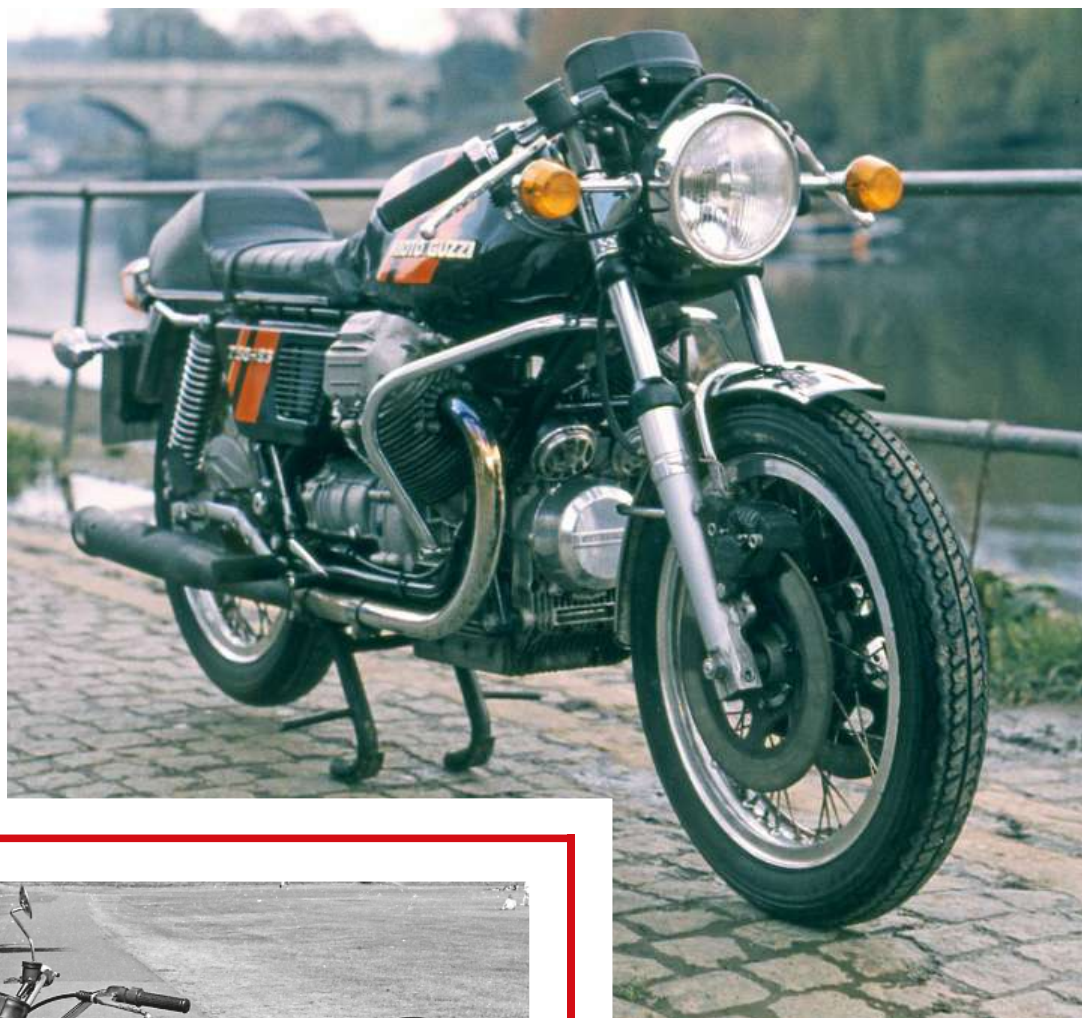
114.2mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.7s/93.10mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

49mpg



## SPECIFICATION

### MOTO-GUZZI 850-T3

#### ENGINE

844cc ohv V-twin, five-speed, shaft drive

#### PEAK POWER

68 bhp at 7000rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1500mm

#### WEIGHT

216kg dry

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

116.9mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.3s/95.12mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

46mpg

model year they'd emerge in export markets, rarely with a fanfare from the franchise owners.

At Ducati, the factory in Bologna had been reconstructed in 1974 while the new 860cc V-twins were being remodelled with styling input (also by Ital Design's Giorgetto Giugiaro). Production of the bike started later that year, but it was essentially a 1975 model that I tested later in the following January. The muscular bevel-drive ohc engine in the 860GT was a lovely piece of work (if you could get the kick-start version I rode started), giving a top speed of 115mph but the chassis had an unfinished feel, that wasn't much improved by the subsequent 860GTS with a bigger fuel tank.

Up in northern Italy at Breganze, Laverda, had been developing its new three-cylinder superbike, the unimaginative-sounding '3C'. It was a beefy-looking machine with a 981cc dohc engine using a novel 180° crankshaft, huge drum brakes and

massive 8in Bosch headlamp. But until British importer Slater Brothers got involved, the 3C didn't really offer the challenge to Kawasaki's Z1 that many thought it should.

For 1975, Slaters collaborated with the factory with an engine-tuning package for a model called the 3C-E (E for Europe) with 75bhp at the rear wheel (more like 80 plus at the crank). It did the trick, lifting the top speed to 133mph at MIRA's timing straight and making it fastest ever there, and ahead of the 1973 Kawasaki Z1. The following year, the specification was largely used in a new model called the Jota, which has becoming legendary for its production racing record in the Seventies.

Also in Italy, the Moto Guzzi factory on the shores of Lake Como had been acquired a couple of years earlier by Alejandro de Tomaso's group and was being invigorated with the shaft-drive V-twins undergoing styling and engineering upgrades. The





## SPECIFICATION

### SUZUKI RE5

#### ENGINE

497cc liquid-cooled single-rotor Wankel, five-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

62bhp at 6500rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1499mm

#### WEIGHT

230kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

110mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.0s/91.54mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

40mpg



## SPECIFICATION

### HONDA GL1000

#### ENGINE

999cc ohc liquid-cooled flat four, five-speed, shaft drive

#### PEAK POWER

80bhp at 7500rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1545mm

#### WEIGHT

290kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

126mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

13.25s/103.67mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

41.6mpg

gorgeous and expensive 750-S3, derived from the V7 Sport, boasted linked Brembo disc brakes and at 114mph flat out was in the top speed ball park at the time.

Long and low with clip-on handlebars, it was the long-legged precursor of the faster 850 Le Mans. For touring, the 850-T3, sharing the same sports chassis as the 750, was more relaxed and provided hundreds of miles of long-range cruising in Europe in 1975.

By then, the big names of the British motorcycle industry had been consolidated into Norton-Villiers-Triumph (NVT). While the Meriden Co-operative continued to produce the Triumph 750cc twins, NVT further developed the three-cylinder Trident using experience gained by the factory in production

racing, including the Isle of Man TT, to produce the T160. I first rode the prototype before its launch at the invitation of Les Williams, who owned the fabled Trident production racer Slippery Sam, and chief development engineer Doug Hele who were based at NVT's Kitts Green experimental centre. It was a revelation, the classic Triumph styling complemented by better steering, roadholding and detailing, all topped by a smoother engine featuring a reliable starter motor.

It also performed well, with a 116mph top speed at MIRA. It made you proud to be British.

The Norton Commando 850 was also brought up to date for 1975 with the Mark 3 version featuring electric starting, a disc rear brake and left-side gearchange to meet US market requirements. ➔



## SPECIFICATION

### TRIUMPH T160 TRIDENT

#### ENGINE

740cc ohv inline triple, five-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

58bhp at 7250rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1499mm

#### WEIGHT

232kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

116.9mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

14.3s/95.12mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

40mpg



## SPECIFICATION

### YAMAHA XT500

#### ENGINE

497cc ohc single, five-speed, chain drive

#### PEAK POWER

30bhp at 6000rpm

#### WHEELBASE

1420mm

#### WEIGHT

132kg

#### MAXIMUM SPEED

89mph

#### ST ¼ MILE

16.0s/80.62mph

#### FUEL CONSUMPTION

60.5mpg

But to also satisfy ever tightening noise regs, more stringent intake and exhaust silencing for the Isolastically-mounted 829cc ohv twin limited its peak power.

I found the whispering Commando Mark 3 had lost none of its crisp handling and had turned into an accomplished tourer, holding an easy 90mph cruising speed. At MIRA top speed was 114mph (the same as the previous year's CB750 Honda), but just before the road test was published in September 1975 the factory announced that Commando production would cease, resulting in a sit-in at the Wolverhampton factory. Triumph T160 Trident production limped on at Small Heath but barely for another year before NVT collapsed.

But the tradition for offering handling superior to the Japanese machines lived on with the Rickman

brothers who after the NVT demise became the biggest bike manufacturer in the UK, offering mostly off-road endure style machines. They had been producing chassis kits for road racers from the mid-Sixties and adapted these to the Honda and Kawasaki fours.

In 1975 this culminated with the Hampshire factory offering a biposto, less full-on, version of its CR900 Kawasaki that combined 130mph performance with race-developed handling, in contrast to the standard Kawasaki Z900 which, with less power than the original Z1, struggled to top 125mph. The Japanese factories had only just started to switch on to the European preference for fine handling, as shown by Honda's CB400F (and rumours of a 750 version), but the big bikes had yet to enjoy the same attention, which explains the appeal of aftermarket kits provided by Rickman, Seeley and Egli, and why the successful teams in endurance racing devised their own answers to improve handling.

Within a year or so, Honda would be returning to racing with a factory team that would trickle down its technology to production bikes, Suzuki would have upped its game with a new range of bikes and the cycle would start again. But it all really started 40 years ago in 1975. **cmm**





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# RETRO REBOOT

## Yamaha Turbo

If Yamaha tried again with their factory turbo,  
it might, just might look like this...

WORDS AND PHOTOS: KAR LEE





**T**he factory turbo battle of the 1980s is a well-documented story where the main four Japanese factories thought they would give the world their take on a mid-capacity motorcycle with the (supposed) power of a litre bike. Yamaha were relatively early into the fray with the 1982 XJ650T – basically a starship-styled XJ650 with a Hitachi turbo fitted. Unlike the other offerings from Honda, Suzuki and Kawasaki, the XJ used a bank of four Mikuni carbs instead of fuel injection. It wasn't enough. Performance was so disappointing that Yamaha offered a 'power-up kit' free the following year. Where the XJ650T excelled though was covering fast miles in comfort, which is where our vision comes in...

#### BODYWORK

While the XJ650 Turbo struggled with its performance, it was a handsome beast to many with its futuristic styling which looked good and worked well to protect the rider so we've kept close to the original profile. We've made some modifications to add built-in crash protectors (the old bike was notorious for smashing fairings and indicators just falling off the sidestand), multiple ram air intakes feed the new motor and improved weather protection around the rider's legs. Four headlights quadruple power over the original unit.

#### ENGINE

Take a 2014 crossplane crank R1 motor as your starting point, add a modified Garrett turbo charger and with less than 6psi boost we'd get 225bhp at the back wheel. Shaft drive combined with the typically useable crossplane power delivery, this would be a perfect engine for sports touring. Lazy and torquey when you're enjoying the scenery of the Alps, mind-blowingly rapid when you need to catch that ferry. It could happen too: Japanese manufacturers are looking at superchargers and turbochargers to help solve their emissions challenges.

#### CHASSIS

The old steel cradle frame from the 1982 bike is thankfully ditched in favour of a modified R1 beam frame. A single shock rear gives the illusion of twin shocks as tribute to the original bike but actually features a rising rate linkage. Thick 41mm USD forks are a far cry from the spindly tubes of old and feature radial monobloc calipers from Brembo. Handlebars and footrests are adjustable for height while pillions get the same comfortable grab handles as before but without the splitting seat cover. **cm**



**What do you think?** Could this be a return to form for the turbo motorcycle? Should Yamaha build it? Drop us a line at the normal address.



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# The Shed...

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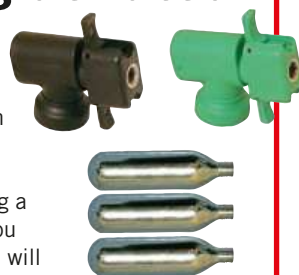
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It's never good to be caught short out in the countryside when you're feeling a little deflated.

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**G**enerally speaking, when I glance at some of my old timing tickets the ones that give me a buzz are the ones with a, how can I put this? A lesser order of magnitude... low numbers... preferably single digit 8s. But I can't wipe the smile off my gnarled boat as I survey the latest pair, and they're not pretty.

But when I could persuade it to start, it ran badly, it was horrible, and horrible makes me very unhappy. Stuff had to be done. I had taken a cursory glance into the carbs and they were a mess, the dreaded ethanol had mulled the diaphragms and various other susceptibles. I vowed to fix it there and then. Believe it or not but there are very few carb sets out there for nonexistent six-cylinder Suzukis, no wait a minute, let's rephrase that, there are none, zero, nix, nada, zilch. So I made a set, it actually took me about 17,000



A quick romp down the street blew the cobwebs away and with Tony Huck's Ultimate Street Bike reunion coming up at North Weald, well, how could I resist? I love the characters at Tony's gatherings, a great mix of Cheech and Yang. Where else can you see a priceless V-twin JAP (not talking Japanese 'Jap' here, we're into Lawrence of Arabia/Brough Superior worth more than a semi in Ruislip type stuff) parked next to a turbo GSXR and an RZ250R! Uniformity? Not a prayer.

With the sun beating down I sat in line while I waited to run, the combination of snug leathers, stiff boots and a somewhat obstructive airbox meant that gear changing was a touch tricky, substituting one trainer on my port side helped a bit for the next run. This immense bike is not exactly meant for a frenzied dash down the quarter mile and my times would be unlikely to start a small conflagration in a bucket of warm napalm. I didn't care, the bike ran beautifully and lots of people scratched their heads, smiled and walked away with puzzled looks on their faces. My work there was done.

# On a quick charge!

These units are microprocessor controlled and offer a 'maintenance mode' enabling the units to be left connected to the battery to continually monitor and maintain the battery indefinitely. The range also includes RoadStarts, which

All of these models are currently featured in the Sealey Schumacher promotion, so check them out at: [www.sealey.co.uk](http://www.sealey.co.uk).



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# Q&A

## Yamaha RD350LC/YPVS Special

**Q:** Dear CMM, I'm building an Irn Bru homage to the old 7UP LC special from the 1990s, which you've said you'll include in a future magazine, but I have a running issue. The bike won't go properly under load and gets worse the higher up the gears I go. It does not go above 70mph and then only gets slower. The right hand cylinder runs hotter than the left and the bike runs erratically.

The following has been done: new plugs, HT-leads, caps, coil, rewind stator, carbs changed over (carbs cleaned and stripped). The bike when I got it hadn't run for about 16 years, the wiring loom was a mess so the engine was stripped and vapour blasted. About £600 of new official Yamaha parts were put in, the crank was redone for £300 and the engine was rebuilt by a pukka mechanic. It runs a standard LC airbox with a 350 YPVS standard engine, it has not been tuned. Mick Abbey is stuck as well! Help!

**Brian Thomson**

**A:** It is a great help that the engine is, or at least is supposed to be, in



Irn Bru special, burps!

*standard condition. Sounds like you might have a problem with the ignition, with the timing possibly being different between the cylinders, or although the carbs have been cleaned, are they assembled to the correct spec with all the right jets, slides, needles, fuel levels, etc? Or maybe the crank seals got damaged in the assembly process? You know, really there isn't that much to a two-stroke and it is just a case of checking that every part is working as it should be and to the proper spec, then the engine as a whole MUST work as it should.*

## 1984 Honda CBX750

**Q:** Regarding the reader who has rebuilt his CBX750 in the August

Our very own wizened sages, Messrs **Mark Haycock** and **Steve Cooper** are here to answer all of your woes, be they mechanical or spiritual. Every month we will be giving some model-specific advice as well as some general tips. Don't forget to send in your own tips too.

issue, I had the same problem when I had the tank and carbs off mine and it would not start. I set up a direct supply of fuel to the carbs hanging from the rafters of the garage roof and it would run, bypassing the fuel tap. I eventually found that the vacuum hose to the fuel tap was adrift.

Hooray, I thought (I had forgotten that it wouldn't even start with the fuel tap on the prime setting either), but it still wouldn't start and it was only when I

was talking to someone at David Silver Spares that I was told to try and start it with the fuel tank cover open and after a few coughs it fired, apparently there is a vent via the fuel cap and if blocked can cause a vacuum in the tank.

I swapped the seal and cap from another tank and it ran fine!

**Steve McGlynn**

**A:** Yes, that tiny little hole is crucial to the running of a bike engine. I am surprised though that the engine would not run at all. Usually it will run for a while until the vacuum develops.

## 1982 Yamaha XV750

**Q:** I have just purchased a Yamaha XV750 1982 (rear chain drive). Can you please let me know if I can fit spoked wheels and hub brakes, as I don't like mag wheels and disc brakes.

**John Boggis**

**A:** I am sure you could but I do have to disagree with you about ancient vs modern wheels and brakes. Cast wheels are stronger and need no maintenance,



Can you change mag for spoked?



## 1977 Suzuki GT250B

**Q:** I have a 1977 Suzuki GT250B which has been restored. I am unsure about the correct main jet sizes. The ones fitted are 105 which are different from the 'A' model quoted in the Haynes manual. The air filters were SSB but I have restored it back to the original box.

**Martin Allan**

**A:** There was a whole range of jets specified for the A and B models, running down to 87.5 and up to 102.5. The choice would no doubt have originally depended on the local climate and height above sea level. So yours are slightly above the top of the range, which is probably not a bad thing as running a bit cooler will make seizure less likely. You could experiment though: the jets should be fairly easy to find.



and disc brakes give better control as well as power. Maybe the best and easiest way would be to get an old-fashioned bike which already has the desired features?

### 1974 Suzuki GT750L

**Q:** My bike will not start on the right-hand pot unless the choke lever is held firmly down, but once warm the bike won't idle on this cylinder. Once moving briskly through the gears the bike runs on all three! I have checked points, plugs, choke linkages and all are fine, any ideas?

**Kevin Newton**

**A:** It sounds like you have a problem with the slow-running jet in your right-hand carburettor as the cylinder runs perfectly okay when the throttle is opened, but seems to need extra enrichment to get it going. Alternatively, it could be an air leak at the carburettor mounting which would cause a weak idling mixture. **cmm**



Could it be your jets?



Having issues with his 400 Four idling!

## Honda CB400 Four issues

**Q:** I'm halfway through my Honda 400-4F project; the engine has gone back in the frame and is running but for some reason I can't explain, when I rev it up, it does not come back down to idle straight away. The cables are not tight and if I prod around on top of the carbs with my finger the engine note changes. I can't see any obvious cracks present in the rubbers, any suggestion?

**Ski Rance**

**A:** Excessive mixture weakness can cause this and the fact that when you press on the carburettor tops you notice a difference in engine note does indicate that air is leaking here. I would check the gaskets underneath and screw tightness if I were you. Otherwise it is possible that there is a problem with the carburettor linkage which will need to be investigated, probably with the airbox removed so you can check the free movement of the slides.

## CX500 Engine paint finish

**Q:** My CX500 project rumbles on and the engine is stripped and cases ready to go for aqua/vapour blasting. The trouble is: what to do with them once they're all nice and clean? Conflicting advice says to leave the metal bare but having gone to all the trouble of stripping it all down my worry is that after being run a few times tarnishing will set in and the engine will look crap again. Others advise clear lacquer.

I've gone this route before and have had problems with the surface finish starting to yellow. Then there's painting, but which paint to use? Most seem to require baking on at high temperatures for an hour or two. Will just running the engine be enough to cure the paint? My previous solution of using an old Baby Belling cooker for small parts is okay

but engine cases won't fit! Plus I'm concerned about warping and bugging up the gasket seal.

I can't be the only home bodger in this dilemma. Are we forced to use the professionals at project-busting costs or can a good result be achieved in the shed? Don't even suggest using the kitchen cooker. Tried that once – not a good idea unless you're single and live alone!

**Rob Neal**

**A:** There was a reason why the Japanese manufacturers painted the alloy parts originally and that was because it is not as durable as other aluminium alloys. Unfortunately, the painting process they used was only designed to last for a few years before the bike was scrapped. You will need to use



some sort of protection.

As you say, the lacquers available for home application are no good because they discolour with the engine heat. I do not think you will ever get a truly long-lasting finish using home-applied paint, but you might be content to re-apply the finish every few years. The

best result would be produced by a professional as you might expect, but this is not cheap.

I have had pretty good service by spraying WD-40 on to aqua-blasted alloy from time-to-time. It's very cheap and convenient but not as new: and I know that matters to many restorers.



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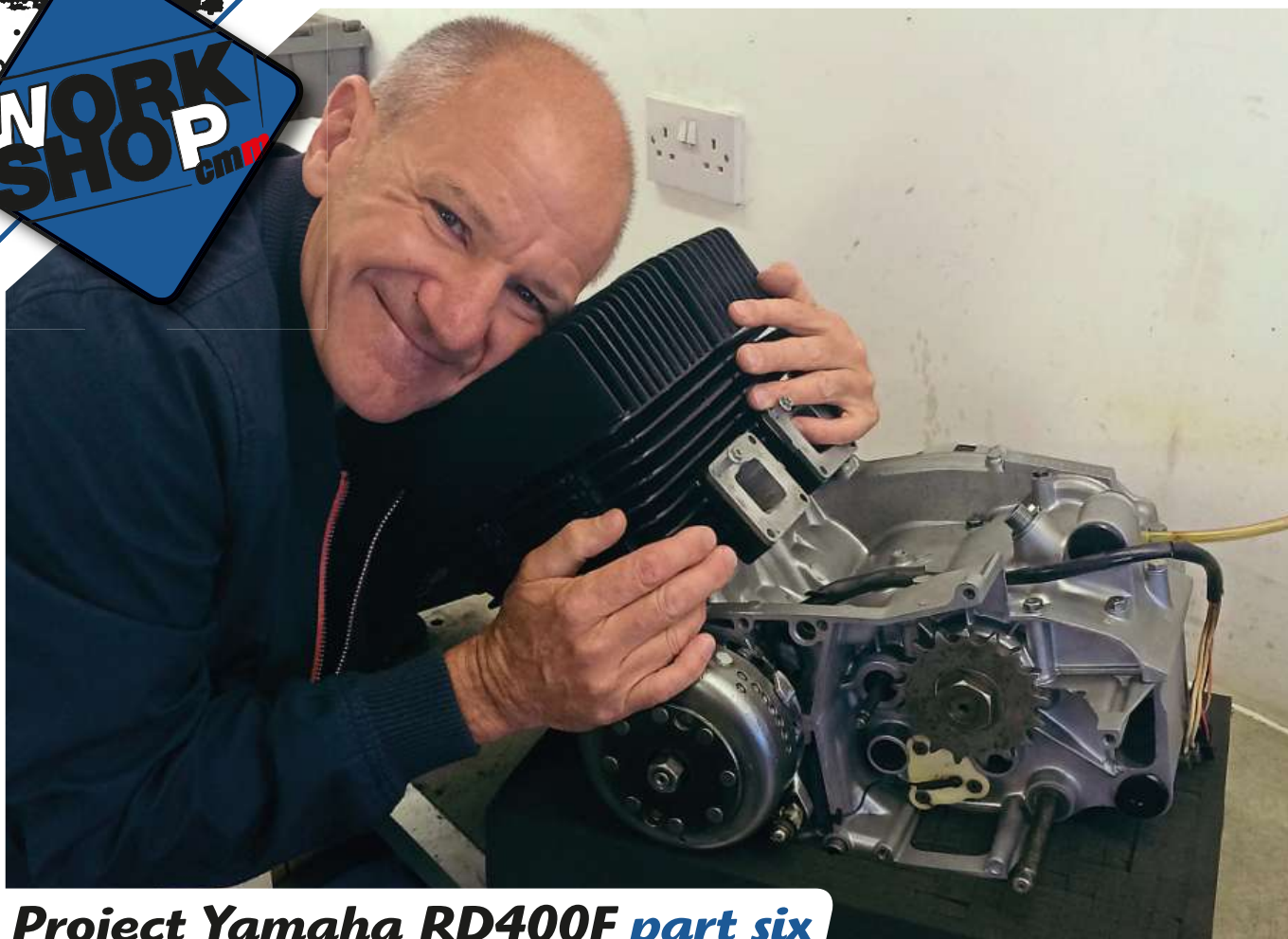


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## Project Yamaha RD400F *part six*

# Motor-maniac!

Ahhh two-strokes: every man and his dog tried to tune them. Look what Niall found with his RD400F!

**I**'ve used the phrase 'bitten off more than I can chew' many times since I took delivery of my tatty RD400F last winter.

Initially, the euphoria of simply finding this Jap classic kept me going but as I gradually pulled her apart, I realised that the job in hand was bigger than I first thought. What lurked beneath wasn't good, so time had to be allocated and money had to be spent. As a Scot, the latter is never a good thing to do.

The good news is I have a new cliché: 'I can see light at the end of the tunnel,' is used on a regular basis now and I'm even predicting she'll be on show appearing in all her bright yellow glory at the CMM Stafford show in October! The final piece of the jigsaw before the rebuild could commence was fettling the motor, so in between my British Superbike duties that has been my mission over the past month.

I've been stripping, sourcing and blagging parts from where I can, but it's all been worthwhile as I now have

the finished article sitting on my bench looking as pristine as the day it left Japan. Over the past week, late at night, myself and James Whitham have been swapping detailed WhatsApp images of our recently minted engines – sad I know, but this time at least it's legal!

I mentioned in my first article that although the motor would kick over, firing her up was never an option. There was also a lumpy feel and a faint grinding metallic sound so I assumed all wasn't well inside. As it turned out, everything was reasonably intact but having seen no action since 1998 moisture had penetrated the main bearings and crankshaft so everything was badly corroded. In many ways this made things easy as the bottom end was unsalvageable and had to be replaced.

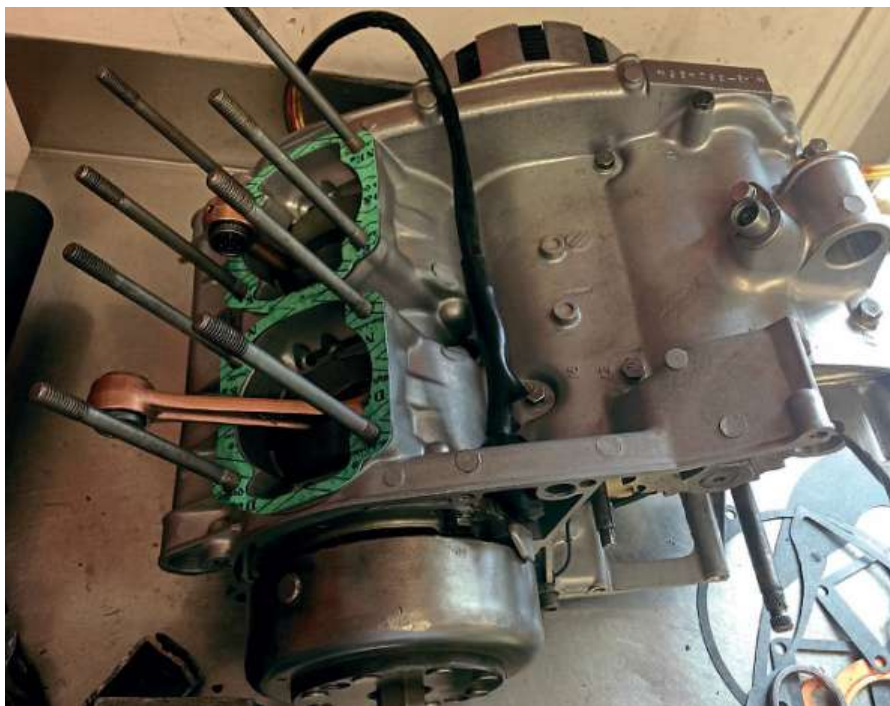
I could possibly have got by with re-ringing the original pistons but along with the reed blocks they had been hacked into odd shapes by some madman with a file! As a teenager with limited mechanical knowledge, I practiced similar tuning

techniques on my 350 LC motor but I at least tried hard to keep any modifications neat and tidy. As you'll see from the pics this wasn't the case when 'tuning madman' attacked my RD.

After taking the motor apart I decided it was time for professional advice and this time I turned to Redline KTM in Loughborough. Rob Kirk is the workshop chief there and although he mostly works on orange Austrian machines there is nothing he doesn't know about two-stroke Japanese engine prep. Being well connected I also knew he would be a one-stop-shop when it came to sourcing bits so I asked him to check everything over and I'd take his advice on what had to be junked, repaired or replaced.

In the grand scheme of things I probably got off lightly as Rob reckoned the crankcases, gearbox and clutch were all in decent nick, however, as expected the crank, rods and main bearings were swiftly consigned to the bin. Rob just chuckled when he saw the 'tuned' pistons and told





Niall's RD motor mid-build.



Parts sorted ready for the rebuild.



Clean as a whistle and ready for install.

me my barrels needed a 0.75mm rebore with new pistons plus all bearings, rods and crank.

Seventeen years of damp shed storage had also taken its toll on the appearance of the cases so Rob recommended I have them Aqua Blasted by Midlands Blast and Refurb. For a mere £30 they came back looking like new so well worth a call (07931 538379) if you need any kind of bike component preparation, refurb or repair. Another respected and long established local company, Service Exchange Parts in Kegworth did the rebore and also supplied my new pistons crank and bearings. Thankfully, both cylinder heads were in good condition so along with the barrels they only needed a sand-down and respray, and all with the same B&Q heat resistant paint I used on

my LC motor! After a complete gasket set arrived from Grampian Motors in Liverpool (and in my absence) with help from a Redline apprentice, Rob put my motor back together in an afternoon.

The anti-vibration head and cylinder rubbers also came up nicely with some recently acquired WD40 – one of my boys races in their colours! In other news you'll see my paintwork has landed back from Racepaint UK. Tez up there had a challenging time with my kit as it was pretty rough. The seat unit and side panels were chipped and cracked but tank was the worst as it had been cut, welded and was full of Cataloy putty.

Racepaint UK charged their standard rate for preparing and painting a tank, side panels and seat but I took from our conversation during the handover many



He's nuts with his nuts.



This machine will look the business! Top paint.



Clean and all parts installed.



extra hours had been spent on my bits. I know £450 plus VAT is a lot of money in any man's book but the trash I dropped off at Racepaint UK miraculously came back as 'better than new', immaculate paintwork. I know many people try doing it themselves with rattle cans and do a good job – fair play to you – but I like my bike to be as good or better than new in this respect.

Having nearly almost everything ready now, I'm seriously excited about the build but there is a problem. I had help with my LC and Fizzy restorations, but being familiar with these bikes had the push come to shove, I'm sure I could have eventually rebuilt them on my own. My RD400 is different. I took her completely apart around six months ago but I know I would struggle past putting the forks, swingarm and wheels in place.

I had originally enlisted the services of Daryl Young at IDP Moto to help with my rebuild but a mountain of work has landed at his Silverstone base. Along with our very exciting 350LC Reboot project he also has to prepare another thirty LCs for the Silverstone Pro-Am revival event – he is seriously busy. Luckily, LC special enthusiast and all round good guy Dave Yates does have a few spare evenings so he has agreed to help me out. We'll get started in the next few days so I'm confident that this time next month I'll have something on the bench resembling a part built RD400F! **cmm**



Yet another cheesy grin!



Nice bit of tuning work here.

## Yamaha RD400: a brief history



The origins of the RD400 stretch back to the 1960s and the YR5 which was designed to replace the venerable YR3. In 1973 the YR5 was replaced by the RD350, which came with a reed-valve engine and a disc brake. By 1976 this RD had become a 400, thanks to increased stroke, and the pleasing, rounded lines were changed to solid, angular ones.

The 1976 RD400C had wire wheels, with mag wheels as an optional extra. For '77/'78 in came the D or DX – this model had natural alloy or black painted mag wheels and a seat tail cover. Both the C and D had footrests bolted under the frame, like the earlier 350, but this changed with later RD400s. The next year saw the RD400E, which had CDI

ignition and an updated engine with around 40-45bhp. Other changes saw thinner spokes on the mag wheels and altered exhausts and brake calipers. The almost identical RD400F (well, in this white/red scheme, Niall's is yellow) came on the scene in 1979 and featured small changes to the graphics and bars. For 1980 a new, liquid-cooled kid came on the block for Yamaha – the RD350LC.

Issues with the RD400 mainly stem from age and misuse. Some owners report gearbox issues (some don't) while many report that exhausts can crack and fracture. Mostly it's age-related: tanks rot, reg/rectifiers blow, seats can split and hold water, fuel can gum up the carbs – or worse – and paint is often shot.



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# Letter of the law

Scoop gets an unwelcome letter and a severe attack of the runarounds. Why is insurance such a bind?

**I**t was a normal Saturday morning and I was debating whether to work on the Suzuki Stinger, sort out the garden or take a chance on the weather and go for a ride.

And then postie did what all posties do best – unknowingly ruin a perfectly good Saturday. The letter landed on the hall floor with a slight flurry and landed face down with a bit of slap; almost as if it was on a mission. To be honest I nearly pushed it to one side but curiosity got the better of me.

The envelope had a look of vague officialdom to it but nothing to really indicate its contents. Ripping it open it was apparent that the correspondence was from an organisation called the MIB – nope, not those 'Men in Black' or whatever that film was, instead it stood for Motor Insurance Bureau and according to their website, and I quote: "MIB Group consists of the Motor Insurers' Bureau and subsidiary companies Tracing

**CERTIFICATE OF MOTOR INSURANCE**

Certificate and Policy Number: DJ132/300112

1. Registration mark of vehicle(s) AKX 212E
2. Name of policyholder Mr Stephen Cooper
3. Effective date of the commencement of insurance for the purpose of the relevant law 10th January 2015 at 00:00
4. Date of expiry of insurance 9th January 2016 at 23:59
5. Persons or classes of persons entitled to ride Mr Stephen Cooper

Provided that the person riding holds or has held a licence to ride the vehicle and is not disqualified from holding or obtaining such a licence.

The policyholder may also ride a private motorcycle not belonging to him/her and not hired to him/her under a hire/purchase or leasing agreement, as long as the policyholder has the owner's permission to ride the motorcycle.

Where the driving other vehicles extension is shown under section 5 of this certificate of insurance this policy does not cover use to secure the release of a motor vehicle, nor otherwise specifically the subject of insurance by this policy, which has been seized by, or on behalf of, any government or public authority.

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**Exclusions:**  
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*N. Marshall*

Nail Marshall  
Motor Underwriter

Note: For full details of the insurance cover reference should be made to the policy.

Advice to Third Parties  
Nothing contained in this certificate affects your right as a Third Party to make a claim.

This policy applies to vehicles registered in the United Kingdom as described in the Certificate of Motor Insurance in respect of events occurring in all member countries of the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Andorra and Switzerland (including events occurring in all member countries of the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Andorra and Switzerland).

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Check your vehicle is on the MID: [www.askMID.com](http://www.askMID.com)  
askMID advice line: 0845 165 2888

Lines are open  
from 10pm Monday to Friday and from 10pm Saturday  
Date: 03/06/2015

**Stay insured. Stay legal.**  
askMID and DVLA tackling uninsured vehicles

Vehicle Registration Number: AKX212E  
YAMAHA

Dear MR STEPHEN JAMES COOPER,

**Do not ignore this letter.**  
To avoid a penalty, you will need to take action immediately.

The record of insurance for your vehicle AKX212E does not appear on the Motor Insurance Database (MID) and this means if you take no action, you will get a fine.

The MID is the central record of all insured vehicles in the UK. If your vehicle is on [www.askMID.com](http://www.askMID.com) then you do not need to do anything else.

It is now a legal requirement for a vehicle to be insured at all times unless it has been declared off the road. As the registered keeper you are responsible for this. This letter sets out what you need to do to stay legal and avoid getting a fixed penalty notice from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Yours sincerely,

Nail Drape  
Head of Enforcement Services

**askMID**  
Motor Insurance Database

**MIB**  
Motor Insurers' Bureau

**DVLA**  
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

[www.gov.uk/vehicle-insurance/uninsured-vehicles](http://www.gov.uk/vehicle-insurance/uninsured-vehicles)

**What you need to do now**

Contact your insurance provider if you think you are insured and your vehicle does not appear on [www.askMID.com](http://www.askMID.com). The Motor Insurers' Bureau and DVLA cannot update your records on the MID.

If you are not insured, you must officially declare your vehicle as 'off the road' or purchase a valid insurance policy - without one of these you are breaking the law. To avoid penalties, your vehicle must also be recorded on the MID when it is insured.

**Notify DVLA if:**

- a) You are keeping the vehicle off the road. To do this visit [www.gov.uk/make-a-claim](http://www.gov.uk/make-a-claim) to find out how to make a 'Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN)' either online, by phone or by post.
- b) You no longer have the vehicle. You need to tell the relevant section, on your Registration Certificate (V5C) and send it to the DVLA. If you do not have the V5C, write to: DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1SD, with the vehicle registration number, make, model, date you sold it and the name and address of the person you sold or transferred it to.





Services Limited, MIB Management Services Limited and MIB Portal Services Limited.

"Our Group mission is to operate as a centre of excellence to:

- Significantly reduce the level and impact of uninsured driving in the UK.
- Compensate victims of uninsured and untraced drivers fairly and promptly.
- Provide first class asset management and specialist claims services."

All very laudable and most of us who ride bikes would generally support their work. Beside the MIB logo was a DVLA one. If I'm honest my first impression was that the letter was a spoof ad although it had an aura of authenticity. There was little to reinforce its credibility. Until I read the opening line. Apparently my Yamaha YL1 was not insured and if I didn't take action I would be receiving a fixed penalty notice. If you've ever had such a letter from the MIB you'll know the disconcerting feeling of doubting your own memory. Was the bike really uninsured? Had I been riding illegally? Had I forgotten to pay Peter James Insurance back in January? A quick check through the bike documents box file confirmed that I hadn't lost the plot and that all my bikes including the YL1 were currently insured.

So armed with a large mug of self-righteousness and a brew I phoned the MIB, jumped through various options and then waited until someone answered. The person checked my details, the reference number and vehicle registration number. I was told the bike was not on the MIB database and that I needed to rectify this by contacting my insurance company (who happened to be closed over the weekend).

Wearing my investigative journalist hat I asked why it was possible to be insured and not on the database. The options were;

1. The policy was a new one (it's not; it's five months old).
2. I'd made a change to the policy (I hadn't).
3. It was a personal plate (not sure how this one works as AKX212E doesn't seem to match any letter in my name!).

When I stupidly mentioned the registration was an age-related one for an imported vehicle that's been continuously taxed, MoT'd and insured for at least eight years this drew a blank with the person at the other end of the phone who said they knew nothing about that side of things. Hang on, shouldn't they know about such things? How about accessing the DVLA database to verify my facts and information? All to no avail; it was my job to prove that AKX212E was insured or potentially get a fine: innocent until proven guilty? Forget it pal!

With the weekend somewhat spoilt and not wanting a second letter the little Yam stayed in the garage but come Monday morning I was straight on the blower to the insurers who confirmed all my bikes were insured and should be on the MIB database. As I was out and about, it wasn't possible to go to [www.askMIB.com](http://www.askMIB.com) there and then and check but Peter James Insurance had a look on my behalf and rang me back to confirm all my bikes were there present and correct. The insurers also commented that they also had no idea why I'd received the letter.

Back home the same day I also double checked on the MIB database and AKX212E was listed. So they got another call and when I finally spoke to another human being they confirmed that, yes, I had been sent a letter. Following a discussion outlining the call to my insurers guess what? MIB also agreed I was on their system for the YL1 and that all was rosy.

When pushed the agent made similar noises to their colleague I'd spoken to before. Various other mumblings were proffered by the MIB but there were no concrete answers. My insurance broker, the insurance company and their officers had all done their stuff but somehow the MIB had got it wrong. Now okay, mistakes happen, systems go

wrong etc. etc. but think on this. It's us, the vehicle owners, who apparently have to ensure that a third party (our insurance provider) has supplied another third party (the MIB) with the correct data. Just how does that work please?

How can you and I be held responsible and accountable for a process I have no input into? If I was a professional cynic I might question just how much the powers that be pay the MIB and what happens to the those hapless individuals who don't follow all due process when they get a letter. How many argue; "rubbish, I know I'm insured. Who the hell are the MIB and how can they fine me?" Even though you are insured the possibility of being fined is almost a certainty if you don't prove your innocence.

I don't know who the MIB would work with to fine us, but let's say you're away exploring the foothills of the Himalayas, cruising Route 66, riding the Pan-American Highway or touring Europe and away for ages? Is there an appeals process? Perhaps the single most annoying thing about this that we, the motoring public, are paying for all of this: has anyone else reading *CMM* had similar issues? Please write to Uncle Bertie and share your pain with the rest of us. He tells me that an insurance feature for classics could well be on its way...







## Project Suzuki X7 *part 4*

# The Joy of X7!

He's enjoying his X7 resto is our **Mr Whitham** and it's moving on at a pace.



**F**irstly, I have to apologise for the recent lack of progress on the X7 front.

I know it must seem to you that Niall (the big teacher's pet) has been cracking on with his RD400 and I've just been doing nowt, for the last two months, but nothing could be further from the truth, oh no. The hold up with the Suzuki has (as expected) been the chromework. The firm I use is called Prestige at Mexborough, they're family-run and do a mega job but have always had a lengthy turn-round time.

Anyway, I haven't just been scratching my backside in the meanwhile, I've had plenty of shed time, completely rebuilding a 1986 Yamaha TZ250, and making a start on an '88 TZ too. The '86 has come out lovely (see the pic) and I've recommissioned the motor properly with new rods, pistons, rings and seals so I

can take it on track without fear of it destroying itself if I get a bit giddy! I've lost too much arse skin over the years to build a racing two-stroke with old part-worn bits – especially cranks and seals. I'll tell you all about sorting out these little race bikes in the coming months.

Right, where was I? Oh yeah, the X7. The bike has started to take some sort of shape on the bench now with swingarm, centrestand, yokes, airbox and engine bottom end all fitted to the basic frame. I prefer to fit the bottom end in the frame this way before completing the top-end in situ coz it's easier than wrestling with a whole motor and there's a lot less chance of scratching your nice freshly painted frame.

I love building up the bottom ends of motors. I always liked trying to do Airfix kits without using the instructions as a kid and this is sort of the same. Sort of. When I strip a motor I always put the various



Like an Airfix kit, says Whit.



**Simple solutions:** We've said it before – go to a place that's been recommended.



Just with more, important parts!



Painted parts done.



The front-end comes together at Whit's.



Prestige of Mexborough: top ladies and lovely work!

assemblies in clean boxes or trays, crank in one, clutch in another, gear clusters and selector in another etc. This makes it easier when it comes to the rebuild, but in actual fact it'll only go back together one way, as long as you don't have any bits left over chances are you've done okay.

Horizontally split cases are a lot easier to deal with than vertically split ones cos you can fit the crank shaft, gear shafts and selector mechanism into the bottom case before popping the top case on when you're sure everything looks right. The cases should go together quite easily with no more than a tap or two of a hide or nylon mallet.

Sometimes you get a lovely little hollow 'knock' sound as the cases touch each other. I love this (do I need help?). Anyway, if they don't go together reasonably easily take the top case off, make yourself a brew and check everything again. Never batter away with a hammer ➡



Proof of the pudding.





Before being sorted.



And after... much better.



Suzuki Vintage Parts treasure!

or try to 'pull' the cases together with the screws or bolts: if you need to do this there's something wrong.

It's also a good idea to build up the bottom end dry at first, securing the cases together with only a couple of bolts. Then pop on the gear lever and go through the gears, turning the primary shaft (where the clutch will eventually fit) with one hand. If every gear works as it should and you only have one neutral you can take the top case off again, apply jointing compound, refit the case and torque up all the casing bolts for good.

I've stripped and painted the seat pan and sent it off with a new cover to a local upholsterer called Tony (not that his name is significant or 'owt'). I've built seats up myself but to be honest they've never been as nice as a professional would do and a badly fitted seat cover can ruin the look of a nicely restored bike, right?

Most Japanese bikes of this era had fork sliders that were brush-wheeled and lacquered. They tended to corrode under the lacquer so some people just flat them off with wet n' dry and paint them a random silver or polish the ally with autosol paste. Either looks okay but it's actually as easy to paint-strip the 35-year-old lacquer off and use Scotch-Brite to get back that brushed look and then re-lacquer – the look is much more original.

Some of the smaller components like the top yoke, headlight brackets, horn etc. are satin black. I've done these with Simonise acrylic paint from an aerosol and I'm dead happy with 'em. The last job has been the engine side cases and the cylinder head, all of which were originally finished in a weird satin grey colour: it looks like the non-stick stuff you get on some pans.

I thought this would be difficult to replicate but the bloke at my local auto paint place (sorry, I don't know his name) matched the colour and the finish no problem. The results are much better than I thought they would be, almost indistinguishable from the new old stock casing I borrowed to match up.

A box of stuff I ordered arrived from Suzuki Vintage Parts, mostly rubbers, cables, light lenses and plastic parts that'll really make the bike ping! The guys there



Hard-work to get forks right.



At last, the legs are finished.



This lovely TZ is going to be in a future issue of CMM.

are very helpful and know their stuff. It's reassuring to know that if you can't bring the original part up to scratch you can buy new instead of spoiling the finished job. I know that some restorers don't agree with

this ethos, but to be honest I don't care. I like the odd new part to set off the look.

Right, that's it for now. I'm off to fire up the TZ and fill my shed and surrounding area with lovely smoke! **cmm**



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## Project Yamaha TX500 Part 4

# Going ape!

Poor Mark, his TX500 seems to have been the subject of some monkey business. So what can he do to sort it?



**O**ne of the things I was glad about with my TX500 project was that despite other bits being a bit more difficult than I had expected, at least the electrical system would be all as standard, and not the usual mish-mash found on old bikes.

A closer look showed that my optimism was ill-founded. Unfortunately, the fashion in the US in the early Seventies was for ape-hanger bars and my bike had been (un)suitably modified. So they fitted a set of bars considerably higher than standard which meant that the various controls would no longer reach, so some trouble had been taken to accommodate this on the wiring front. I shall look at the mechanical controls later on, but now I shall concentrate on the electrics.

One of the joys of Japanese bikes in those days was the provision of devices which had been commonplace for decades on cars, such as electric starting and indicators and later safety extras such as an emergency kill switch. The downside was the extra wiring necessary but at least the switches were designed in such a way

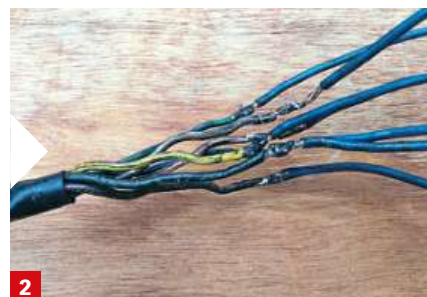
that they could easily be reached without moving the hands from the handlebar grips by miniaturising them and combining them into units by the handgrips.

All this is very familiar of course, but take a look at a typical contemporary British arrangement (Photo 1) and you can see how crude and awkward it is and thus what an advance was made by the Japanese.

Even better, it was often found (as on the TX) that the wiring was completely hidden from view as it was placed within the handlebars – a very neat arrangement. My bike did not have the wiring hidden and nor could it be said to be neat. After removing layers of gooey, slimy, formerly sticky tape I found what had happened.

The wires had all been cut and extended in two different ways. On the left hand side the wires had a set of plain blue wires (Photo 2) inserted, while on the right hand side different coloured wires had been used, though the wrong colours, as what appeared to be an American telephone cable had been utilised!

Not a pretty sight, but at least the joints had been soldered – though as usual the

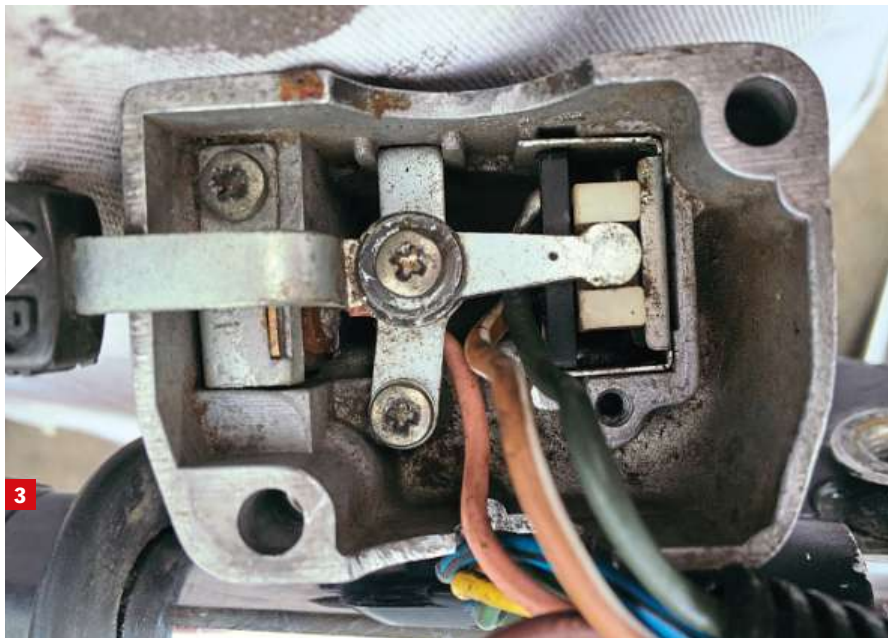


**1/** Crude Brit shi...er set-up. **2/** Blue wires extended the left-hand switch-gear.

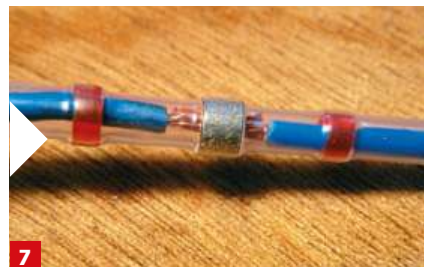
tape had exceeded its lifespan and thus was pretty useless. As something similar to standard handlebars were going to be used, I could remove the extension wires and rejoin the originals, but there was a possibility that the wires would then be not quite long enough. I also would have preferred to run the wires within the handlebars as intended, but on reflection that would not be an easy job.

The handlebars fitted must have been non-genuine and hence did not have the





**3/** Looking into the switch-gear itself put Mark off rewiring these parts directly. **4/** Cheap colour-coded cable to the rescue! 50m of wire, 1m lengths or up, 40 colours, £12.99! **5/** A full range of splices that should help us do the job!



**6/** Rings of hot-melt adhesive at each end and solder in the middle. **7/** Slide the right size splice over the wires you want to join. **8/** Start from the solder in the middle as this needs most heat and then work outwards.

slots needed to route the wires through. I could have drilled them out but I felt that it was more trouble than it was worth so I forgot that idea.

Instead I used some corrugated conduit I had acquired ages ago and always knew would come in handy! It did occur that instead of re-extending the existing handlebar wires, I could solder new ones on to the handlebar switches but looking at what was involved (Photo 3) I could see that it would be very fiddly as the joints were small and hard to reach without dismantling the switches completely.

So the best approach would be to cut off the extensions and attach new lengths, this time of the correct colour, from the mid-point right down to the headlamp. I checked in my collection of vehicle wires but I was missing a few of the colours. However, on eBay I found an item which offered a total of 50m of wire, in lengths of 1m upwards and chosen from 40 colours, for £12.99 including delivery (Photo 4). Can't be bad!

All I needed to do was to work out what colours I would need, but naturally some of those I needed were not available. One plus point was that this was the new-style thin-wall wire which can carry a considerably heavier current than the older equivalent (16.5 rather than 8.75 Amps

for 1mm<sup>2</sup>) and has tougher insulation. Being thinner, it is easier to route in confined spaces such as on bikes.

So what is a better way to join wires? Photo 5 shows a range of splices which offer the perfect solution. What they consist of is a tube of heat shrink plastic with a ring of solder in the middle and a ring of hot-melt adhesive at each end (Photo 6). They come in a range of sizes, so you just select one which will fit snugly over the wires.

After sliding the splice over one wire, prepare the end of each wire by stripping off a few millimetres of insulation. As you are going to solder the copper, it needs to be clean and shiny, so if the wire is old you will need to use an abrasive to get the inevitable black oxide layer off. Then push the wires together so the strands interlock. Now slide the splice over so the solder ring is covering the bare copper (Photo 7) and get heating.

I use this butane-powered soldering iron (right) which, by removing the bit,

becomes a miniature blowtorch or hot air gun. Not bad for £15 at Aldi.

The solder needs most heat so I start with the middle and move outwards – probably best to practise first as you can overdo it. Hence the solder melts and flows into the wires, the outer tube shrinks to fit tightly and the adhesive bonds to the insulation making a perfect insulated and waterproof joint, which takes up scarcely any more space than the original wires (Photo 8).

To find anything, you need to know what to ask for so you can internet search for 'heat shrink butt splice solder' or some combination of those words. With the word 'butt' in there, please be careful what you search for, especially if you are easily

offended! I got a few sets for a knock-down price but the reason was that they came direct from Hong Kong, but they only took a week or so to arrive. **cmm**

**Next time:** more wiring tribulations as I try and get everything going properly as Yamaha intended.







# Handling small parts

It's something we all have to do.  
But how do you clean 'em up and sort 'em?

WORDS: PETER WATMOUGH AND BERTIE SIMMONDS PHOTOS: PETER WATMOUGH

**W**e all have small parts... No, I'm not talking about my own affliction, instead I'm talking about the small parts we all need to complete our restorations.

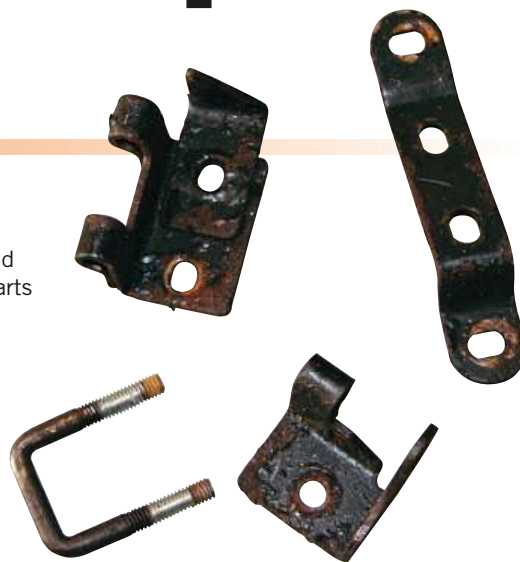
These are small parts that almost always seem to cost the earth from the manufacturers. These are the bits that get lost on the garage floor, the bits that never seem to be included in the box of bits the bloke gave you with the bike, or the bits that – should you buy the wrong replacement parts – will make you the laughing stock of the local club.

As you know, we're great believers in make-do-and-mend at CMM and – yes – while we love the wallet-busting restorations we also like the rattle-can restos and shed-life real-life re-animation projects that you do on a budget. That's why we had to give some space to CMM reader Peter Watmough's ideas on how to rejuvenate and restore small parts. If it saves money, we think it's a winner: over to you Pete.

One of the problems faced when restoring an old motorcycle is the number of small brackets, bolts and other tiddly and otherwise fiddly parts that have seen better days and are annoyingly hard to replace.

Larger parts such as frames, swingarms, subframes, seat pans and the like can be shot blasted, and/or stripped or rubbed down. But what about smaller parts? Manually cleaning, stripping and de-rusting all of the little parts you find on a modern classic motorcycle can be a real pain.

Nuts and washers can be replaced, but not so the specialised bolts and brackets that are found on many older bikes: parts that hold side-stands in place, or headlights, small brackets and specialised bolts. Sure, we could spend a lot of time and money reverse-engineering things, but for many of us we can only really use what we've got,



so we have to re-use what we have as replacing them could be out of the question.

The solution I have come up with is to use a hobby rock tumbler. Strange sounding name I know, but bear with me. These can be found on that well-known auction site for around £20: and mine is a fetching shade of pink. They





They look rubbish going in.



Don't laugh! It works.



Like panning for gold.



All the rust gone!



Clean and ready for paint.

are commonly used to tumble stones and polish them for jewellery making. More robust (and expensive ones) are available, but I've been using this one successfully for the last two years with some great results.

To load the unit it's a simple case of screwing off one end and putting the parts inside. I add a small amount of water (about a third full) a small amount of washing-up liquid and then some small stainless steel polishing beads. If you don't have these then small ball-bearings or even washers can work as well. The abrasives and polish supplied in the hobby rock tumbler are not necessary for most of the projects we'd use the thing for, but keep them handy as you never know.

For this example, I'm restoring some brackets normally found from the underside of the seat of a Kawasaki Z750 E1 that I'm currently restoring. Check out the images and you can see the age-old problem with these old parts. As is normal with bits on the bottom of a classic motorcycle's seat, the spongy bit has simply soaked up all the water this, combined leaving the bike outside, has meant that most of the small metal parts under the seat aren't looking their best. They're rusty, oily and a real pain to clean one-by-one with solvent and a wire brush. Who wants to spend all day doing that?

All I did was remove them from the seat itself, add them to the drum, turn the thing on for 12 hours or so and then disappear to the pub. One thing you need to be careful of is this: just like the washing machine, you really shouldn't overload it, or it won't clean the parts effectively and could go bang under the stress. Better to do parts in batches. So, all you do is add the parts, water, washing-up liquid and the polishing beads, then screw the end back on and switch the thing on. The drum then rotates like any washing machine and (as the name suggests) it tumbles the parts, which gently rub together and against the polishing beads and the old paint and surface rust is gently rubbed off.

In my experience, you do need a good 12-hour tumble to get parts

clean and corrosion free. At the end of that time, the drum is removed from the machine, opened and the contents sieved to separate the parts from the cleaning beads.

The parts then need to be rinsed in clean water and dried quickly so as not to rust again. I either use a heat gun, hairdryer or 10 minutes in a hot oven. As a final step I always paint the parts to as close a finish as I can to the original. I simply use red oxide primer and gloss black – the results are seen here.

Sure, maybe they're not as professional as err, the professionals, but you can make a massive saving this way and save yourselves a lot of hard work on the cleaning wheel or with the solvent. In two years I've had no problem using this system so I hope it helps CMM readers out. **cmm**

Not bad at all!





## Project Bandit *part two*

# Fun with forks!

CMM's **Andy Bolas** is on a mission to make his big Bandit have sorted suspension. He's done the rear – time for the front.



**S**ince the last time we spoke I have managed to get a few miles on the Bandit 1200 and I'm really pleased so far with how it's coming along.

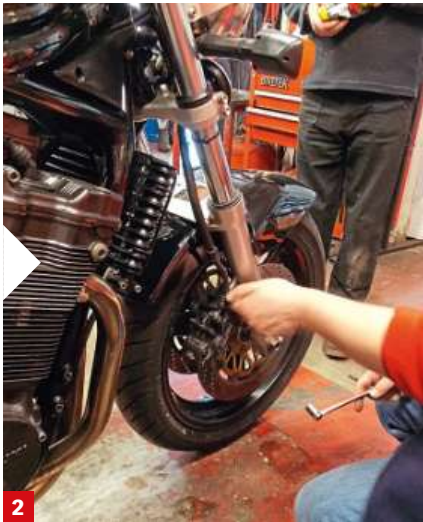
It's fair to say the new rear shock and tyres have transformed the bike and it's a lot more composed down my favourite bumpy lanes – although the front-end was very soft and dives heavily under braking. I did experiment with winding the pre-load in to its maximum adjustment which made a slight improvement but it was still too soft and warranted more work. So as discussed in part one I have purchased a new pair of progressive springs from Hagon. So here's a step-by-step guide to refreshing your suspenders!



**1/** Before removing the forks from the bike you need to measure how much the fork leg protrudes through the top yoke then release the top yoke clamp and release the fork cap by half a turn as once the forks are out it will be very difficult to undo the cap.



**Simple solutions:** Big suspension jobs need another pair of hands.

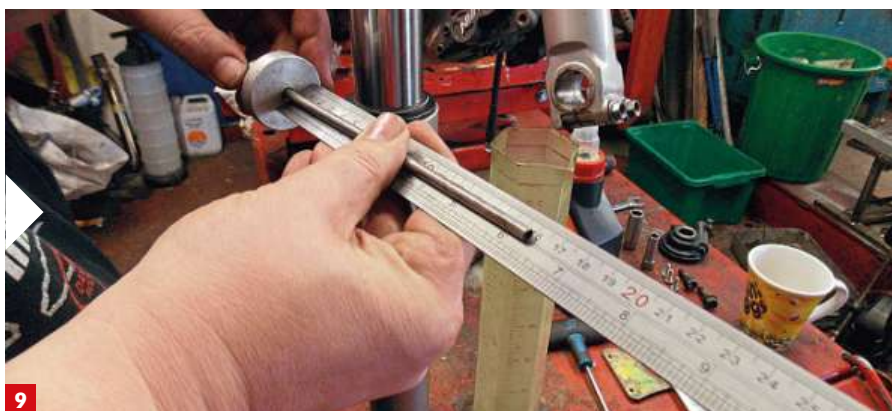


**2/** So with the bike on its centrestand on the work bench it's time to undo the pinch bolts for the wheel spindle, release the wheel spindle slightly, remove the front brake calipers and speedo cable. **3/** The bike was then raised with a scissor jack so the front wheel could be removed, time for tea! **4/** Remove the front wheel and mudguard including the fork brace.



**5/** With the wheel and mudguard out of the way you can now release the bolts on the bottom yoke and remove a fork leg. **6/** Now the fork leg is out you can now remove the fork cap and wind this up the pre-load adjuster to gain access to the flats on the adjuster. From there you locate a spanner and release the locking nut on the damper rod so you can remove this from the damper rod to allow the removal of the spring. All very fiddly!





**7/** Make a note of the position of the locking nut (ours had two threads showing below the nut) ready for reassembly time. **8/** With the cap now removed you can remove the spacers and spring (noting the order of the spacer, washer and retainer) tip the forks over an oil tray letting the spring down gently then allow all the oil to drain from the fork. **9/** Once all the oil has drained out, give the fork stanchion a wipe, check your required air-gap which for these forks with the Hagon springs is 160mm now you need to measure 160mm on the oil level gauge and lock it off. **10/** Compress the forks and add fork oil (10w) until it registers on the gauge.



**11/** Now attach the tube from a brake bleeder or oil removal syphon to the oil level gauge. This will remove any excess oil and you know the air gap will be spot on in both legs.

**12/** The new spring can now be fitted (put the tighter wound coils at the top) add the washer, spacer and then the retainer over the spring. Now you can refit the preload adjuster/cap to the damper rod noting its previous position.







**13/** Loosely fit the fork cap back into the fork stanchion, then refit the fork leg to the bike, check how much the leg protrudes through the top yoke set to the required height before doing up the pinch bolts in the bottom yoke. You can now tighten up the fork cap before tightening the pinch bolt in the top yoke. Carry out this again to the other fork leg. **14/** With both fork legs rebuilt and refitted you can now refit the mudguard, wheel, brake calipers and speedo cable, it's also advisable to treat the wheel spindle and caliper bolts to a little copper grease as they are out. Make sure you have checked everything is tight and don't forget to give the brakes a pump before you use the bike!

Just looking at the springs side by side (well, top to bottom in this pic) you can see the difference! With the bike off the ramp the front end felt instantly firmer, next day we had a bit of a ride out planned so I decided to use the Bandit and see how the bike felt. We used a variety of roads from bumpy B-roads to dual carriageways, around 30 miles in total. We stopped and I reduced the preload on the forks as they felt a bit too harsh. After this adjustment the bike now feels about as good as you could get it without taking it to a suspension specialist. To date the upgrades have cost a little short of £400 which in my eyes is pretty good value as the bike handles well now for a big old bus and it's all stuff you can do at home with the correct tools and spare time.

Next time we will be on the dyno getting power runs with the standard exhaust, a Micron race can, a full Akrapovic race system and then with a Dyno Jet kit and free-flow air filter fitted so we can see how much power you get for your hard-earned.

#### Thanks to:

- Keith at Chase Superbike Centre for lending me a ramp and the use of his tools 01543 466416
- Hagon: 0208 5026222

## Bandit 1200 – the best?



We reckon pound-for-pound the Suzuki GSF1200 Bandit is the best of the family.

Released at the end of 1995 for the 1996 model year, the bike was powered by a detuned air-oil-cooled GSX-R1100 lump. The 1157cc motor was solid as, producing only 100bhp, but still giving that tune-ability that all the big GSX-R11 motors have. Little wonder people saw it as a blank canvas for turbo, big bore 200bhp or more stunt bikes. The bike soldiered on until a 2001 redesign, but the early models are the potential classics. By the Noughties the Bandit had lost its edge to the likes of the Hornet 900 and Fazer 1000.

We main tested the bike back in June 2014 and our feelings still stand – this is one heck of a motorcycle. Of the two versions to go for (a half-faired version came as well as the naked) we'd take

the unclothed of the two, if you want something that's going to become a future classic.

Bad parts of the bike are its ability to rot and that soggy suspension. Andy has shown what can be done front and rear, so don't worry about originality as the quality of the standard suspension wasn't much good from new. New suspension front and rear shows a caring owner. The other big issue was rot: silencers, down-pipes, frame welds – you name it, it could rot! Frame, wheel and engine paint was pretty shoddy too. If all this puts you off, don't let it. Andy has shown what can be done with a big, beautiful Bandit, so go find one. It won't let you down.





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## Project Suzuki GSX-R1100L *part five*

# Cool kids!

Our Suzuki apprentices in Doncaster are moving apace with the 1100L, this month it's gearbox and clutch rebuild. Just what state are they in?

**L**ast month we hooked back up with our young spannermen and women from the Suzuki Apprentice Centre in Doncaster as they tried to restore a GSX-R1100L in time for this year's Motorcycle Live event.

The aim was simple: teach the youth of today restoration techniques to get their hands dirty and restore a 1990 bike which had seen better days. The bike was found by Tim Davies from Suzuki GB's Vintage Parts Programme.

The bike belonged to his brother Howard, being sold to his friend Stuart Baker, who rode it until 2003 when he left it in his garden. Sadly Stuart passed away in 2013 from Marfan Syndrome. The bike will now be rebuilt and auctioned off in aid of charity.

With the chassis sorted and the engine rebuilt, it's now time to look at the gearbox and clutch to see what 10 years in a garden does to the normally robust 1100's



Don't even think about getting these in the wrong order.





Our Arri lays the parts out.



Cleans and lubricates where needed.



And assembles.

gearbox. The students involved in this stage were: Arri Williams, from Frasers of Gloucester, Craig Gatherer of ATV Services, William Hodges – Bridge Motorcycles, Tom Crooks of Crooks Suzuki and Chris Gray from Thunder Road Motorcycles.

The students washed the countershaft and the driveshaft and began to strip them down, which they found quite straightforward apart from the circlip which retains second gear on the countershaft. The circlip sits into a recess in second gear and there is not enough clearance to remove the circlip without sliding second gear further onto the shaft.

This is made possible by opening the circlip which locates sixth gear and sliding it towards the third and fourth drive gear, which then lets second gear slide along, allowing access to the circlip which has caused all the issues. It's amazing how some simple things can take so long...

With all the gears removed a hydraulic press was used to remove the two main ball bearings as both the bearings felt a bit rough when being turned by hand. New bearings were installed using the press and the students were careful to use spacers which ensured the load was taken through the centre race of the bearings as they were pressed onto the shafts.

All the components were checked for wear and damage, in particular the gear teeth and selector dogs on the sides of the gears. The gear selector cam, gearshift forks, pins and bearings were also measured and checked for damage or excessive wear.

Third gear was showing the classic signs of wear, with small indentations in



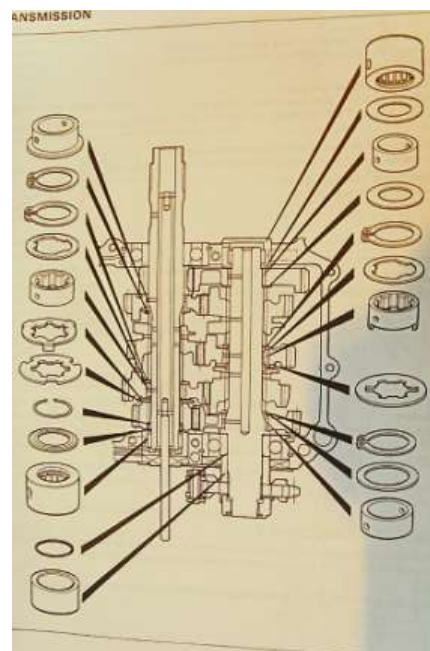
Third gear did have some wear.



New circlips and C-rings were used.



These stop the gears moving.



Essential diagram shows what/where.





Overall, things weren't bad.



Ready to slot in.

the faces of the gear teeth where the hard surface had worn through so the gears on both shafts were replaced and new circlips and seals were used throughout the rebuild.

Transmission circlips, rather like gudgeon pin circlips, should always be replaced as a matter of course so that's what the apprentices did here. If a circlip fails and allows a gear to move, then two gears could be selected at the same time and the transmission will lock-up, which could be catastrophic if the motorcycle was being ridden!

The students started by identifying and arranging the gears into two sections. As a general rule the small gears will be on the countershaft (input shaft) and the larger gears will be on the driveshaft (small gear driving a large gear = a reduction in speed and a corresponding increase in torque). They reassembled the gear shafts ensuring the new circlips were fitted the correct way round with the rounded face against the



Each part needs correct location.



All mating surfaces clean.



With these parts to go in the right order, it pays to do it right first time.

gear (which ensures the thrust is acting on the largest and strongest area of the circlip and shaft) and ensured that all the oil ways on the splined shafts were correctly aligned with gear bushing oil holes.

All the gears and bearings were lubricated with engine oil throughout the rebuild and the students checked the gear shafts against a cross sectional picture in the manual to ensure the correct positioning of all the washers, spacers and gears. You really don't want to get it wrong here!

They then refitted the selector drum and installed the gearshift forks into the lower engine casing and with the upper casing inverted and supported on blocks they fitted the two gear shafts and checked that the C-rings, dowels and bearing dowel pins were correctly located in the casings and checked the oil seals were properly aligned and located. The students then ensured that neutral was selected and that both shafts turned freely ready for the lower casing to be lowered into position, while

at the same time locating the gear shift selector forks on the relevant gears.

Once the cases were together, the students temporarily refitted the gear selector lever and while turning both shafts checked that all five gears selected correctly. The clutch components were washed and inspected and the drive plates (made of steel) showed a small amount of distortion on a flat surface and the drive plates (friction material) were worn so both sets were replaced. Let's face it, on a motor so old and with it in bits, it's really the best way.

The clutch outer drum and inner hub were in good condition with no appreciable indentations in the slots where the plates move and no excess movement or damage to the damper springs in the back of the outer drum. The gear selector mechanism and quadrants along with the diaphragm springs, pressure plate, bearings and push rods were all okay too, testament to the strength of the old girl's clutch, despite



Almost there with the box.





Another C-clip goes in.



All vital parts were new.



New clutch plates go in.

being an ex-race machine with around 120bhp going through it.

The selector quadrant was refitted to the end of the selector drum and two plates fitted to secure all the components in place before the gearshift shaft was pushed through the engine cases, ensuring correct engagement with the selector drum.

The oil pump drive gear was fitted to the back of the clutch outer drum and as the drum was installed and engaged with the primary drive gear on the crankshaft, the students checked that the oil pump drive gear was also correctly located with the oil pump before installing the centre spacer and bearing.

The students fitted the inner hub and the centre nut was secured using a special tool to hold the hub and the clutch plates fitted in the correct order using plenty of oil to coat the surfaces as they were fitted. The steel plates, due to the way they are stamped out during manufacture, have a rounded side and a flat side (rather like the gearbox circlips) and it does not matter which way round they are fitted providing they all face the same way.

With all the clutch plates in place the pressure plate was fitted and the two diaphragm springs placed in the centre of the clutch hub and secured with a

large nut assembly which compresses the springs and engages the clutch. The outer plate was fitted and secured with a circlip after locating the clutch push rod down the centre of the shaft and the clutch release bearing and thrust piece.

Once the engine had been slotted back into the frame, the outer clutch casing was fitted and the sprocket covers which locate the hydraulic clutch actuator cylinder and push rod. The students fitted a new master cylinder and hose and after checking the routing bled the system and checked to confirm correct operation of

the hydraulic clutch system. Overall it was a testament to the solidity of Suzuki's gearboxes that only wear on third gear was really an issue on a 25-year-old bike. Next month the kids get to sort out the braking system. **cm**

● **Tim Davies' friend Stuart Baker, who owned this bike, sadly passed away in 2013 from Marfan Syndrome and it is hoped the completed bike will be sold or raffled in aid of the Marfan Trust, so if you want to make a donation to the Marfan Foundation go to: [www.marfantrust.org](http://www.marfantrust.org)**



Attention to detail is always welcome.



Master cylinder in place.



The clutch complete.



Looking like new!





## Project Suzuki DR600 part 4

PB's DR600 finally hits the operating table.

# All in the head...

Paul Berryman realised his bike was ailing... this month's stripdown finally reveals the problems.



**M**y classic thumper was ailing; it's been about 30% down on power, 30% down on compression and thus 100% in need of a top end overhaul. So what's the issue?

Well, ask any comedian, and they'll tell you the secret to good comedy is all about the... timing. I wouldn't have expected to find the answer to the DR600's running problems in the first rule of how to tell a joke, but by golly – if I'd looked, I would have. The DR's issues all pointed to tiredness in the bits that squeeze the mixture inside the cylinder.

I was convinced giving the rings, bore and valve seats some love would cure its low compression, oddly coked up inlet tract and general lethargy all in one go: well, once the top was off, it was clear they weren't the reason this old thumper wasn't pulling like a train.

The real problem: the cam timing was incorrectly set. I didn't see it; someone much cleverer than me has to take the credit for that! In spite of regularly writing for a magazine with the word 'mechanics' in the title, I humbly confess to being decidedly average as a spanner man.

Thus I had jumped at the offer of a bench at MTS Classics in Hanslope, where I could plunder their well-equipped workshop, brains and biscuit tin for the DR top-end refresh. Steve Mann and Andy Woolrich of MTS both helped on the Katana project and offer well-humoured and limitlessly experienced support. This single decision proved to be the most important development of the month, as otherwise I would have missed the clue that the DR was burdened with cam timing that was anything but cock-on.

Checking the top end out revealed things weren't as wrong as I'd expected with my compression culprits. The valves

and seats held fluid in a wet test, the bore not only looked fine but measured up within tolerance, the same for the rings and gaps. True the piston looked a little tired, but again, everything measured up okay. I had been looking for something inside that we could blame for the 30% plus loss of compression (110psi tested against an expectation nearer 150), and I was disappointed – there wasn't anything obvious.

What was also unsettling was just how heavy the carbon deposits in the inlet tract were. I already knew we had a problem in that area, but with the DR head in my hands it was much worse than expected. I knew the valve clearances were perfectly set, the valve seats hadn't leaked at all in the wet test and yet still the inlet tract was dirtier than the exhaust! Hmmm, this one was a real head scratcher.

The second opinion came from Steve Mann of MTS who quickly surmised that





With the head off, initially no dramas visible.



Is this the most coked up inlet tract you've ever seen?



Wet leak test – valve seats are all spot on.



Bore micrometer checks proves we're within tolerance.

the cam timing was very likely out. Bingo. I hadn't even thought of this, and yet retracing all the issues we've had, that diagnosis stood sound. The real shame is that I hadn't checked the timing when I'd disassembled the bike to prove it, but I'm 99.5% confident that he's spot-on.

The DR has a single overhead camshaft which operates both sets of rockers, so skipping one of its 42 teeth when timing it up would set both the inlet and the exhaust out by just over 8.5°. The coking up inside the inlet port suggests that the cam timing was set up advanced, and thus the inlet side was opening at the end of the exhaust stroke and collecting the dirtiest deposits from the combustion. Is it any wonder it didn't want to go up hills very fast?

So, how does this happen? Getting cam timing a tooth out is easy; lining up the timing marks on the camshaft and the flywheel is simple enough, but sticking



Piston ring gaps also measure up within tolerance.



the camchain tensioner back into the barrel inevitably tightens the chain. This pulls the cam sprocket out of its correct alignment with the crankshaft, leaving big consequences. On an engine with double overhead camshafts poor timing can make the inlet and exhaust valves interfere with each other, causing massive damage.

Thankfully our DR's simple single-cam meant that was never a problem for us, as no valve overlap damage could be caused. True that really bad timing could still have hit the piston, but ours hadn't. Plain lucky again!

So what to do next? Well, the time served racer in me detests opening engines without making them faster. As it became clear a while back that this motor definitely needed the lid taking off, I started to plan cramming a few more ponies into it. A late night eBay session bore fruit with a second-hand barrel for just £15, and I'll be reboring this to home a 1mm bigger piston (Suzuki's maximum recommended oversize).

After deciding on using standard Suzuki parts for reliability, I ordered a stock 1990 DR650 piston for the 1mm oversize I was after, with the added benefit of it having a Teflon coated skirt creating lower heat and friction. Although neither the DR600 or DR650 are models among those in their excellent vintage parts initiative (which offers special listings and deals on parts for specific models) they still benefit from Suzuki's across-the-board high support for classic models. A DR600 top end gasket set and a piston from the later DR650 were available in just two days. Not bad for a 30-year-old bike that was sold in tiny numbers in the UK.



**The rings may measure up okay, but the colour of the piston raises the question how well were they sealing?**

Although fitting this DR650 piston into the 600 will only add 13cc (the extra 50cc of the DR650 was from an increase in stroke as well as bore) it should on paper add around 1bhp as well as eradicate any tiredness from the old rings and bore.

Along with the cam timing, this little pep-up means the bike's previous asthmatic best of 27bhp on MSG Racing's dyno should be blown away – Suzuki claimed 45bhp back in 1985 which should

see about 40bhp on a reasonable reading dyno – if we can secure that after this refresh, I'd be a very happy chap indeed! Next time out I get the re-bore nailed and build the engine ready for a dyno test. **cmm**

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A smell of fuel is often down to a leaking tap diaphragm.

# HONDA VFR 400

If you're looking for a reliable pocket rocket, you could do worse than look at Honda's jewel-like VFR400 NC30.



## CHARGING SYSTEM

Well known for diva antics, reg/rec unit upgrades very popular.

Once on a chosen or selected path Honda generally follows it through to its logical conclusion. It doesn't matter whether it's biting the bullet and building fearsome four-cylinder stink wheels or pioneering uber-sophisticated auto transmission systems, the Big Aitch always comes through.

The V4 concept is a perfect case in point. Even though the original VF750 models were potential poison Honda knew the basic tenet of the engine layout was correct. Rather than scrap a fundamental blueprint Honda totally redesigned the engine at vast expense to deliver the seminal VFR750 which remains a landmark in motorcycles to this day.

The slated and hated VF series had featured machines of varying capacity so it was only natural

that the idea would be reprised. On the assumption that the 750 was fit for purpose it was only a matter of time before a tiddler was spawned.

The result is an acute reminder of what Japanese manufacturing in general and the bike industry in particular were famous for. The ensuing and almost inevitable VFR400 was, and remains, a master class in miniaturisation. In a package weighing around the same as an RD400 but with 50% more power the VFR400 could hardly fail to be popular. It was in its home country that the smallest VFR really grabbed the hearts and minds of riders.

Japan's officious and expensive licence laws have long prejudiced ownership of bigger machinery for many riders. This has always jaundiced the bigger bike sales in favour of the sub-400cc sector and ➔

## VALVE CLEARANCES

Hard worked motor benefits from regular valve clearance checks.

## EXHAUSTS

Access to rear pipes tricky and link pipe underneath can rot out.







## SPECIFICATION

# HONDA VFR 400

### ENGINE TYPE

liquid cooled, V4 four-stroke  
399cc, four valves/cylinder

### BORE AND STROKE

55 x 42mm

### CLAIMED HORSEPOWER

59hp @ 12,800rpm

### MAXIMUM TORQUE

28.8lb-ft @ 10,000rpm

### TRANSMISSION TYPE

5-speed, chain final drive

### COMPRESSION RATIO

11.3:1

### CARBURETION

4 x Keihin 34mm

### TYRES

100/90 R16 (F), 140/60  
R18 (R)

### FUEL CAPACITY

4 gallons (18 litres)

### DRY WEIGHT

165kg (34lb)

### WHEELBASE

1345mm (53in)

### WIDTH

705mm (28in)

## What to buy and how much to pay

We're looking at the third generation of the smallest VFR400 in the guise of the NC30, not the previous NC21 or NC24. All the information here relates to the NC30 although some facts may be applicable to earlier models.

Conventional wisdom says avoid tuned examples but some people seem to get away with it.

If in doubt ask for proof of what's been done and ask the guy who did the work to verify this.

Race or track day examples will have led a hard life, mostly at higher five figure revs. Ill-fitting pattern panels, lock wiring evidence or drilled fixings are all true

giveaways. Tap water in the cooling system as demanded by scrutineers will have long term corrosion issues for the radiator.

The VFR400 was only officially imported into the UK for three years and at nearly £6000 not surprisingly failed to sell in large numbers. Many examples on offer now will be grey imports and this really shouldn't be an issue.

Some will have been modified with speedo upgrades but if not it's no big shakes. We hear some folk are asking more for genuine UK models but in reality is it a big deal? Price wise you are typically looking at

anywhere from £1000 for a tidy high mileage example with a long MOT right up to around £5000 for a 6000 mile pristine example. Folk are asking more, £7500-£10,000, but whether they are worth that much or even selling for such heady figures is open to serious debate.

The good news is there are loads out there for sale. Our suggestion would be to budget for three grand max and wait for a bargain low mileage example that's been regularly run and well looked after. The only downside might be the ridiculous Cheshire cat smile that lingers long after you've removed your lid!

the mini VFR in all its guises found a ready legion of buyers. The bike quickly became something of a mini cult in its own right and it's easy to see why. Effectively a smaller version of the VFR750R RC30, the machine appeals to a wide cross section of riders.

Those of shorter stature find the bike easy to access, it makes a very credible first bike post-test, it has a good reputation for build quality and, perhaps most importantly, it has that unique V4 cachet. Just like its bigger brother, the VFR400 is deceptive in the way it makes speed. The lazy exhaust note and apparent relaxed power delivery are normally at odds with numbers on the speedo. VFR400s are deceptively fast, feel more like a V4 500 and make 14,500rpm seem like child's play.

The VFR packs a lot into a small package. Arguably in some way it takes biking back to the late 60s and early 70s in the way it allows you to make

progress. Here we have a bike that relies as much on rider skill as it does on power. Just like those seminal Yamaha and Honda tiddlers you can, and will want, to carry insane amounts of corner speed right through the bend.

Low mass, low seat height and good period brakes all allow you to capitalise on what's readily available. It may not sound much today but the lazy way in which the bike makes its 60bhp and its sheer minimalist size make for a hugely impressive ride. As standard handling is said to come on the slightly soft side but that's just Honda ensuring you're not immediately jolted right out of the saddle. It's adjustable and with a little thought and consideration it should be possible to dial it in pretty much to your own needs.

It's a Honda so build quality is right up there. Dirty examples clean up fine and even hugely used ones scrub up reasonably well. The bike is generally acknowledged as being excellent and the issues highlighted in the main picture are possibilities not certainties. If you wanted a rider's bike that delivers peak torque at an intoxicating 12,000rpm, pulls from as low as two grand in top gear and still sings its heart out at 15k this is genuinely the bike you've been looking for. **cm**



Exhaust routing is a delight to behold.



Cockpit is compact but well appointed.



## It's my bike! – Andy Bolas

This is the second NC30 I have owned; it's an imported example although the first one was a UK bike. I saw this particular bike for sale in a local bike shop, they had purchased the bike from its first and only owner as she hadn't used it for a number of years and had no interest in riding any more so decided to sell it.

After a big service and the carbs being removed and cleaned the bike was then put up for sale in their show room which was when I saw it. Although I'm not usually into little four-strokes I was instantly attracted to this NC. The bike was pretty much as you see it now I just gave it a good clean. Amazingly it had covered just over 2000km and was original down to the tyres. It was also one of the few registered in the UK from new by the importer so hadn't been used in Japan before it came to our shores like the majority of NCs. I can also say that it rides as good as it looks although the tyres could do with replacing due to age more than anything else!



Typical late 80s early 90s Honda gear.



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- [www.wemoto.com](http://www.wemoto.com)

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- [www.400greybike.com](http://www.400greybike.com)
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**AJS 350** 1957, 16MS, 15,000 miles, refurbished magneto, starts well, good condition, no MoT or R/F licence, £2700 ono Tel. 07969 344367. Middlesex



**APRILIA AF1** 125 Futura, 1992, rare & a show bike, only 578 genuine km from new, bought & then dry stored, an investment & fun too, £2200 Tel. 01507 524499. Lincs



**APRILIA RS250** 1998, MK2, 1700 dry miles, 100% original, totally untouched (apart from fluids), fsh, full MoTs, used regularly, 2nd owner, oiro, £6000 Tel. 01983 299277. Hampshire



**BANTAM BUSHMAN** lookalike, rebuilt with many new parts, many Bushman bits, MoT May 2016, £1850 Tel. Rob 07703 892706. Northumberland



**BMW K100RS** blue/white Special Edition, 50k on clock, none ABS, tested to May 2016, good condition for age, some paint peeling to side panels, £1200 ono Tel. 07708 662521. E Yorks



**BMW R100R** Classic, 1996, 40k miles, BMW panniers, screen, MoT Aug 2016, £2950 Tel. 07724 322198 9am-1pm. Leics



**BMW R60/7** 1977, vgc, complete rebuild 2007/8 with new parts, stainless steel fixings etc, MoT Aug 2016, £2750 Tel. 01983 865094. IOW



**BRIDGESTONE MK2SS** 200cc, 1969, near concours restoration to orig spec, UK reg, MoT 8/2016, superb example of Bridgestone's high performance rotary valve 2T, rare bike, £4250 ono Tel. 01474 746930. Kent



**BSA A65T** Thunderbolt, 1972, restored to as new condition inc rims & SS spokes, new carb, £4495 ono Tel. 07817 257889. Leics



**DUCATI SS600** full history, only 7200 miles, MoT ready to go, mint condition, been data tagged, comes with V5, owners manual & service book. Tel. 07931 919804. West Midlands



**EDDIE LAWSON REPLICA** 1983 Kawasaki ELR Z1000R2, vgc, power coated frame, fresh paint, period belly pan, Metmachex swinging arm, V&H 4 into 1, £3800 Tel. 07919 691432. West Sussex



**GREEVES 20DC SPORT** 1964, Greeves Road bike, all original, not concours, clean and tidy, docs applied for, £2000 Tel. 07855 663318 after 6pm. E Sussex



**GUZZI LE MANS 5** classic rapid Italian muscle, 1000cc, 30,000 genuine miles, £100s spent, just serviced, years MoT, vgc, £4250 Tel. 07788 442155. Bath



**HARLEY DAVIDSON FXEF80**, 1985, vgc, 24,243 miles, owned, 15 years with trailer, £5000 Tel. 01423 509201. Yorkshire



**HARLEY DAVIDSON Sportster**, 1990, VMCC eligible, early model four speed and chain drive, MoT Feb 2016, £3250 Tel. 01257 411801. Lancs



**HARLEY DAVIDSON SX250** 1976, fantastic condition, really fine example of this very rare trail bike, £4695 ono Tel. 07887 711216 for more details. Hants



**HONDA 600 HORNET** superb low mileage, only 8700 miles, never been wet, many sensible extras, OE exhaust can included in sale, £2700 ono Tel. 01433 620855. Derbyshire



**HONDA BROS 650/HAWK GT** Mods: Fuel exhaust, Velocity foam filters, VFR 400 f/end, VFR 750 rear wheel, Fireblade r/sets, 32k, recent chain, sprockets, battery, no dents, £1245 ono Tel. 07564 930999. Leics



**HONDA C72** 1964 restored, powder coated frame, lovely runner, many new parts, MoT, £2450 Tel. Mike 01386 48007. Worcs



**HONDA CB-1** 400cc, 1989, MoT June 2016, excellent condition, history, reducing collection, £1150 ovno Tel. 01584 890605. Shrops



**HONDA CB125S** Fitted with CGKI engine, refurbished, lots of new genuine parts fitted, too much to list, pictures and list available, on Sorn, will MoT, £1400 Tel. 0191 5860331. Durham



**HONDA CB250K0** 16k miles, original condition, runs well, 30bhp, 100mph, some minor pitting in mudguard, brakes, tyres & exhausts are recent, collectable reg no, £1700 ono Tel. 07749 689160.



**HONDA CB250N** Super Dream, 1982, 45,000 miles, MoT April 2016, Motad SS exhaust, good condition, runs well, £595 Tel. David 07801 350459. North Cambs



**HONDA CB360** 1976 flatracker, lots of time & money spent, MoT, only done 150 miles since built, £1500 or swap for Honda single Tel. 07594 619053. Grampian



**HONDA CB360** USA import, not reg yet & no MoT, all relevant docs to make you the first owner in UK, lots spent, starts & runs, only 5900 miles, too many new parts to list, £2000 Tel. 07783 599166. Gtr Man



**HONDA CB400** Superdream, 1980, with current MoT, £1250 or exchange British classic, cash difference paid, Tel. Pete 01905 21667 anytime. Worcs



**HONDA CB500S** year 2000, MoT June 2016, 15,000 miles, new front tyre front pads and battery, good original condition, Tel. 02084 735089. London



**HONDA CB550K3** 1975, good runner, imported, owned eight years, chrome excellent slight pitting rear wheel fitted new exhaust, MoT, 17,500 miles, £4500 Tel. 01226 497633. South Yorkshire



**HONDA CB650Z** 1980, in good unrestored condition, MoT November 2015, starts & runs well, Motad four into one exhaust, recent service. Tel. Ken 01284 702011. Suffolk



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**HONDA CB72** Dream Sports classic bike 250 twin, 1966, vgc, good runner, very rare & collectable bike. Tel. 01621 772401. Essex



**HONDA CB900F** 1980, currently on Sorn, many new parts/others available, last serviced in 2012 (24,695mils) & unused since, £1800 Tel. 01223 263364 or text 07776 064617. Cams



**HONDA CBF250** 2006, MoT 11 months, vgc, side stand, main stand, Honda rack, all books & keys, service history, £1800 ovno Tel. 07746 846899. Oxon



**HONDA CD175** 1967, Sloper, MoT, was owned by Freddie Frith, 1949 Junior World Champ, £1500 Tel. 01202 773726. Dorset



**HONDA CD200 BENLY** excellent condition, fully serviced, 12 months MoT, £1950 Tel. 01923 461289. Hertfordshire



**HONDA CL175** 1970, 8000 miles, MoT, Street Scrambler, rides great, new tyres, points etc imported three years ago, £2450 ono Tel. 07770 115727. Surrey



**HONDA CL350** long MoT, tax exempt, runs and rides fine, £2500 Tel. Dave 07792 835486. Ross-on-Wye



**HONDA CMX250** Rebel, vgc, 12 months MoT, 8600 miles, would suit lady rider, £1200 ono Tel. 01767 448575. Bedfordshire



**HONDA DEAUVILLE** good condition, garaged, v/reliable, 12 months MoT, Honda screen & standard screen included, two new tyres, £1690 ono Tel. 07980 395470. Gwynedd



**HONDA DEAUVILLE 650** 2000, 24,000 miles, no MoT at present, comes with two new tyres (not fitted) good condition for year, £1500 Tel. 01253 826958. Lancs



**HONDA GL1000** Goldwing, 1979, vgc, Dream Machine Paint, excellent chrome, new road rider tyres, full restoration to original spec, MoT March 2016, £2850 ono Tel. 01631 760253. Strathclyde



**HONDA HORNET 600** Good condition, 18,700 miles, radiator guard, Goodridge brake lines, hugger, MoT to March 2016, £1625 ono Tel. 07510 854868. N Ireland



**HONDA HORNET 600/900** Wanted in decent cond, p/x for Suzuki GS850G 1982 UK spec 28, full service & lots of new parts fitted, p/x 600 would be better for me. Tel. Allan 07443 580719. W Mids



**HONDA NC700X** 6000 miles, 2013, alarm, heated grips, hand guards, vgc. Tel. 07939 816318. West Sussex



**HONDA PC800** 1990, 47k miles, completely refurbished, lovely condition, just tested, superbly comfortable commuter, unique huge boot, Japanese import, £1600 Tel. 01484 862470. W Yorks



**HONDA SL350K1** 1970 totally factory original (except consumables) with 4500 miles, use as is or spruce up, unusual little Honda twin, rare in the UK, £2950 Tel. 01227 360735. Kent



**HONDA ST100** Pan European, swingarm, solid good condition for age, T reg. Tel. 01772 615776. Lancs



**HONDA VFR 750** 1989, red, 59,278 miles, MoT 27 Feb 2016, good starter, £800 ono Tel. 01536 373015. Northants



**HONDA VFR400R-L** UK model, just serviced and MoT, low mileage, best colours, mint condition, £4795 Tel. 01302 310300. South Yorkshire



**HONDA VT500E** 1988, MoT July 16, good condition, part restored, good runner, £595 ono Tel. 07746 407321. Kent



**HONDA XBR** good condition, converted to off side gear lever, Brit style, price includes good standard exhausts, £1450 Tel. 0208 3045132 for details. Kent



**HONDA XBR500** 1985, 48k miles, superb, frame, engine and bodywork resprayed, new centre stand, fork seals, C&S, battery, serviced, runs beautifully, long MoT, £995 Tel. 07982 466727. London



**HONDA XL TRAIL** 1984, twin shock, nothing missing, full MoT, V5 in my name, runs fine, lights, panels, clocks all there, £1450 Tel. 074340 40520. Lancs



**HONDA XL185** classic trail new tyres, shocks, runs fine, full V5, known history bargain, collection Manchester, £1450 Tel. 07434 040520. Lancs



**HONDA XL185** 1981, twin shock trail requires tlc, full V5 correct numbers, known history, £1350 Tel. 07434 072785. Lancs



**HONDA XL600LM** 1986, UK reg, 28,000 miles, standard original condition, good runner, new battery, £1500 ono Tel. +35386 8736636. Eire, Ireland



**KAWASAKI 1100 SPECTRE** Vgc, 99% original, good engine, 50k miles, needs registering, all paperwork supplied, £1150 Tel. 0161 7666353. Lancs



**KAWASAKI A1 SAMURAI** Series 2, 1969, US import with Nova certificate and American title, up & running, everything works, ride or restore, not many of these in UK, £2750 ono Tel. 01474 746930. Kent



**KAWASAKI ER5** 1998, 8000 miles, MoT Aug 2016, recent SS exhaust & rad guard, p/c rack & QD topbox, owned & maintained by retired professional engineer, £1200 Tel. 01772 713656. Lancs





**KAWASAKI GPX600R** 1995, red, 53k miles, drives perfectly, a few minor scratches, up to date photos, s/h available. Selling as finishing short Motorcycle career! £1250 ono Tel. 07527 578719. B'ham



**KAWASAKI GPZ1000R** 1986, great condition, lovely driver, excellent engine, rebuilt from frame upwards, full MoT, excellent tyres chain & sprockets, £1595 ono Tel. 07873 830812. Cheshire



**KAWASAKI GPZ600R** 1989, MoT 03/16, good engine, forks rechromed, new calliper seals 30,000 miles, £600 ono Tel. 01736 763771. Cornwall



**KAWASAKI GPZ900 A2**, 1985, 32,500 miles, good original condition, starts & runs perfectly, new MoT, new battery, new rear tyre, £3500 Tel. Tim on 01432 850453 (day) 01432 355951 (eves).



**KAWASAKI GTR 1000** 1994, factory fitted panniers, recent rear disc, monoshock bushes, Goodridge hoses, new battery just fitted, owned since 2000, 32,541 miles, gc, £1350 Tel. 07434 129349. Derbys



**KAWASAKI H2C 750** 1975, vgc, fully restored, engine rebuilt, frame painted, new purple paintwork and decals by KAS racepaint, MoT Nov 2015, £9995 ono Tel. 07564 318920. Kent



**KAWASAKI KMX 125** learner legal, completely rebuilt, powder coated frame, long MoT, great fun to ride, revs to 10,000rpm, £775 ono Tel. 01270 875529. Cheshire



**KAWASAKI KR1** 1988, imported, 1995, with KR1S paintwork, unmolested original condition, new MoT, ready to ride or restore, £2250 Tel. 07765 230730. Hants



**KAWASAKI S1A 250** 1973, rare 2-stroke triple, fully restored including top engine rebuild, matching engine and frame nos, correctly set up and runs beautifully, £5750 ovno Tel. 01280 823322. Bucks



**KAWASAKI W800** Retro, black, 2013 model, superb example, 5k miles, chrome rack, £4850 Tel. 01285 861462. Wilts



**KAWASAKI Z1A** 1974, lovely cond, engine rebuilt, new paintwork, spokes, rims, tyres and new standard exhausts, superb classic must be seen, £12,500 ono Tel. 07786 162917. W Mids



**KAWASAKI Z750E** 1981, 22k, v orig, Yoshi 4-1, nos seat and tach, MoT, recent brakes, carb diaphragms (need balancing), regular use until recently, easy project or ride as is. Tel. 07764 377519. Surrey



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**KAWASAKI Z750L3** 1983, 30k miles, MoT May 2016, some restoration work, much money spent, £1625 ono, may p/x why? Tel. 07929 510917. Derbyshire



**MATCHLESS 650 CSR** MoT July 2016, vgc, low mileage since rebuild, original green logbook with matching numbers, £5200 ono Tel. Mike 01357 522210. Glasgow



**MOTO GUZZI V50 Mk11**, 1980, vgc for the year, stainless down pipes, overhauled forks & brakes, rack & top box, some history, MoT March 2016 used regularly, £1500 Tel. 01179 492097. Bristol



**SUZUKI 25 WOLF** 1993, full restoration, frame powder coated, racing fern, newly painted bodywork, digital speedo, braided hoses, new pads, 12 months' MoT, £1200 Tel. 077520 56580. Co Derry



**SUZUKI BANDIT 600** Custom bike, good condition, day time MoT, £1400 ono Tel. 07429 447452. Kent



**SUZUKI GAMMA** 125cc, 1984 race, sprint, parade, Interpan, Scitsv, new tyres, goes and handles well, very good inside and out, bargain, £1400 Tel. Trev 01609 777260; 07976 788976. N Yorks



**SUZUKI GS850** excellent condition, great mechanically, MoT, reliable, reluctant sale, low mileage, having to sell due to looking after elderly parent, no time to enjoy, £2500 Tel. 07857 926724. Lancs



**SUZUKI GSX250** 1980, p/ coated frame, new tyres, carbs, cleaned, new jets, full service, full MoT, very rare, £600 ono Tel. 07737 612159. Northants



**SUZUKI GSX1100** Naked Katana, excellent condition, £2500 Tel. 07903 777252. Cumbria



**SUZUKI GSXR750SP** 1994, 3000kms from new, never raced, spotless and very collectible. Tel. 01364 631119. Devon



**SUZUKI GT250 X7**, restored to high standard using new genuine parts, Crankshaft overhauled, new rear shocks, new tyres, MoT, £3250 Tel. 07581 008210. South Yorkshire



**SUZUKI GT250 X7** 1982, all speeds, K/N braided line, filters, fork brace, s/damper 29,700 miles, good runner, £1500 Tel. +35386 8736636. Eire, Ireland



**SUZUKI RL250** 1974/75 Beamish, silver, engine trials bike, good runner, good fun bike, new piston 2 years ago, slight weep on fuel tank due to ethanol problems, £1000 ono Tel. 07708 562885. W Sussex



**SUZUKI RV50** Monkey Bike, 50cc rare, concours condition, as new, £2750 ovno Tel. 01664 474894; 07773 881441. Leics



**SUZUKI SP400** 1982, good old thumper, new adjustable Hagon shocks, recent tyres, £1300 Tel. 07429 447452. Kent



**SUZUKI T500R** 1971, UK Bike, fully rebuilt using original or OEM parts, original chrome, engine rebuilt by Pete Odell, 29,000 miles, £3500 ono Tel. 07773 426654. Derbyshire



**SUZUKI TC125** 1972, rare American model, on/off road switchable gearbox, 1196 miles, imported & fully UK reg, brought from DK motorcycles, will MoT for buyer, £1500 ono Tel. Jason 01743 884482. Shrops



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**SUZUKI TL 1000S** 1997, black, 31k miles, Yoshi exhaust, PC Commander, genuine 125 bhp, MoT, lots of extras, owned for last 5 years, good clean example, first to see will buy, £2200 ovno Tel. 0785 9011863. B'ham



**SUZUKI TS125** 1984, A reg, water cooled, drum brake, starts & is rideable, used as a field bike, needs a few bits, have log book in my name, £625 Tel. 07587 201333. West Sussex



**SUZUKI TS185ER** 1981, twin shock two stroke, MoT April 2016, 9500 miles, recommissioned not restored, £1500 ono Tel. 01969 667416. North Yorkshire



**SUZUKI TS250M** 1977, very clean, very original, not much needed to make perfect, UK bike, 12 months MoT, starts, runs & rides great, £2795 Tel. 07984 608285. Beds



**TRIUMPH 21** 1960, 53,000 miles, excellent condition, starts and rides well, £2800 Tel. 01522 511660. Lincs



**TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE** T140V, 1978, matching numbers, bought to restore, great restoration project, £2700 ono Tel. 07873 848728. Northants



**TRIUMPH DAYTONA** 1991, 38,800 miles, becoming collectable only 200 made, not used, started regular, great overall condition, £2200 ono Tel. 01502 476847. Suffolk



**TRIUMPH THUNDERBIRD** Sport, 2001, 23,350 miles, MoT, s/h, fitted Vonzetti single seat, Lucas style rear light, bar end mirrors, front fairing, tyres, chrome, paintwork all good, £4600 Tel. 01323 892694.



**TRIUMPH TIGER 110** 1960, Bathtub matching numbers, good condition, new paint, chrome, 35,000 miles, Sorn, £5900 Tel. 01290 551673. Strathclyde



**TURISMO FANTICMOTOR** outstanding original UK sports moped in superb unrestored condition, 6 speed model, runs great, MoT just expired, £2400 Tel. 07557 679004. Kent



**TWO CLASSIC BIKES** for sale Yamaha XT250 and Honda XL250 both imports and both running good rolling restoration. Tel. 07778 597170. East Yorkshire



**VELOCETTE VENOM** Clubman, 1961, a genuine matching numbers bike with one owner for the last 35 years, detailed history notes, original yet unrestored, £8500 Tel. 07885 639811. Oxfordshire

  
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**VELOREX SIDECAR** Good condition, some fittings, accessories as photo, £425 Tel. 0161 7666353. Lancs



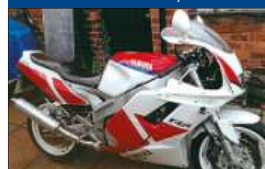
**YAMAHA DS7** 1972, vgc, 5k since full rest, Electrex ign system fitted, goes as it should, show or ride, buy and ride away, £4250 or make me an offer, buyer collects. Tel. 01823 430198. Somerset



**YAMAHA DT175** 1975, full MoT, tax exempt, own this fully restored example of this classic trailie for only £1800 Tel. 07734 200023. West Yorkshire



**YAMAHA FJR1300** fabulous condition, new MoT, recent tyres, panniers & electric screen, aftermarket MRA screen inc, £3250 Tel. 07939 816318. West Sussex



**YAMAHA FZR1000** 1991, exup RU, 34,000 miles, 12 month MoT, vgc, ready to ride may p/x dirt bike, bargain £1250 ono Tel. 07715 266250. Merseyside



**YAMAHA FZR250R** 1989, 3IN exup model, 24,000km, great condition, four cylinder four stroke with an 18,000rpm redline, 12 months MoT, currently on Sorn, £1700 ono Tel. 07897 763743. Isle of Wight



**YAMAHA FZS600** One owner, low mileage, new tyres, taxed/ MoT, top box, regularly serviced, £2000 Tel. 07821 621124. Essex



**YAMAHA R1** 1998, only 15k miles, full s/h, the best available fast appreciating classic, £3350 Tel. 07801 315558. W Mids



**YAMAHA RD350** 1981, 4LO engine & frame, matching numbers, 39,500 miles, vgc, used regularly, £2950 ovno Tel. Ian 01473 271546, 07759 334924. Ipswich



**YAMAHA RXS100** in nice condition, new chain, sprockets and battery, MoT till March 2016, £700 ono Tel. 07929 829256. Lancs



**YAMAHA RZ250RR** YPV5, 1985, imported 1991, 99% restored in amazing condition, new MoT, £2950 ono Tel. Craig 07765 230730. Hants



**YAMAHA SR125** 1992, MoT expires Feb 2016, very low mileage of 01271, excellent condition, almost like new, £1050 ono Tel. Dennis 01227 740909. Kent



**YAMAHA TY320** Majesty trials bike, nickel frame, all new wheels, tyres, parts, Yamaha alloy tank, elec ign, runs/rides well, very good condition, £5250 ono Tel. Wayne 07781 19148. Guernsey



**YAMAHA VIRAGO 535** W reg, 2000, MoT June 2016, fitted with screen & rear carrier, toolkit & two keys, new battery, £2275 Tel. 07896 608341. Essex



**YAMAHA VIRAGO XV250S** 1996, 11,500 miles, exc cond, garage stored avoided rain, newish tyres, exhaust lots of extras, no rust, no bumps, all working beautifully, MoT, £1600 Tel. 0113 3188531. W Yorks



**YAMAHA VMAX** carbon black full power VMax, very near to standard but with gorgeous Delkevic cans, standard silencers included in sale, Tel. 07751 585571. Bucks



**YAMAHA XJ600** 28,000 miles, MoT, seat cover, exhaust & tank in poor condition, rest OK, £750 ono Tel. 01403 267192. West Sussex



## FOR SALE

**BIKE PROJECTS:** Triumph Tiger Cub, James Comet, Norman Lido, BSA Bantam, Yamaha XJ650 Maxim, Motobecane Mobux, BSA Starfire etc. Tel. 01633 895922. Gwent.

**BULTACO PERSANG** very good condition, resprayed, new parts tyres, spokes, cables, brake linings, chain sprocket, runs very well, new alloy tank, 1976, £2500 Tel. 01277 353867. Essex.

**D7 BANTAM SUPER DELUXE** 1966, perfect restoration project for which I have no time, £300 spent on engine rebuild with new cylinder - just the frame to do now, bike complete except battery and tool kit, more pics available, £650 ovno Tel. 01260 227247; 07860 554663. Cheshire.

**HARLEY 883 N/14** converted to 1200 by Sycamore HD Screaming Eagle RSD, 2-in-1 carbon ops, selling due to bad back, £9200 Tel. 01733 341966. Cambs.

**HONDA CB100N** 1986 restored, excellent runner, new carburettor fitted, just needs indicators wired up for MoT, original paint work on tank and panels, tank is rot free, many new parts fitted, 20,000 miles, will not find better. Tel. 07870 869679. Leics.

**HONDA CB125 TDC** Superdream, 1983, silver, MoT March 2016, new battery, Comstar, all wheels, e/start, flyscreen, reluctant sale of very tidy collectable classic due to family health issues, £950 ono Tel. 01872 240206 after 5pm; 07812 457484 (no texts please).. Cornwall.

**HONDA CB250** 1997, Nighthawk, in good original condition, 30k currently on Sorn but would MoT if wanted, chrome, paint & tyres in good condition, £800 Tel. 0114 2691750; 07989 669282. South Yorkshire.

**HONDA CB350K4** good running order, low mileage, will put MoT on just had a service, can deliver, £1200 Tel. 01253 712442. Lancs.

**HONDA CBF125** mint, 2014 bike, but bought in May 2015 from Honda dealer, pre-registered to dealer, hence the low mileage of just 277 miles, still under manufacturer's warranty, datatag fitted, only for sale as son has decided he's not a biker! £1950 no offers Tel. 07753 165547. Surrey.

**HONDA CBF600** long MoT, Givi rack, box, ABS, Dec 2009, 6000 miles, fsh, excellent condition, £3250 ono Tel. 07999 811488. Rutland.

**HONDA CBR600** 1991, Sorned, £600 Tel. 01529 413579. Lincs.

**HONDA CBXC 1000** 1982, 70% of major restoration complete images and details can be emailed, house move to smaller house only reason for sale offers around, £4500 as valued by the CBX club Tel. 07870 215778. Lancs.

**HONDA CUB 90** 2002, complete overhaul on engine, cycle parts, paint work excellent condition, MoT, £695. Single bike trailer, £250. Tel. 01483 762123. Bognor Regis.

**HONDA GOLDWING GL1000** 1976, non runner project, no V5 or key, need space, ideal for trike conversion, £600 Tel. 07900 968277. Dorset.

**HONDA GOLDWING GL1100** 1100cc, 1983 reg, standard model, black, receipts for £1300 recently spent, good tyres, two sets of keys, new battery, MoT, £2500 ono Tel. 01332 831674. Derbyshire.

**HONDA INOVA** 125cc, 2003, MoT 2016, 11,000 miles, perfect for the knowledge, £395 Tel. 07984 347164. London.

**HONDA PCXS 125** Super stylish with idle stop, £500 extras, Oct 14, just 1500 miles, spotless, mint condition, mature rider, sorry to let go but ill health sale, £2395 ovno Tel. 077890 61218 (no text messages please) for details. Yorks.

**HONDA VTR FIRESTORM** 1999, 1000cc, accident damage, open to offers. Tel. 07749 461594. Lancs.

**HONDA VTR1000** 51 reg, 9400 miles, MoT July 2016, immaculate, red, big tank model, Goodridge, hoses, powerbronze, screen hugger, datatagged, datatool, alarm, good tyres, first to see will buy, £1995 Tel. 01246 200842; 07935 175649. Derbyshire.

**HONDA XBR500** 1985, black, 47,900 miles, superb condition, frame, engine & bodywork stripped & resprayed, new centre stand, fork seals, chain & sprockets, battery, fully serviced, MoT March 2016, workshop manual, runs perfectly, £1150 Tel. 07982 466727. East London.

**KAWASAKI E500** very good engine and runner, black project bike, to restore only needs front tyres, fork seals and a good clean easy winter project, MoT, £500 ono Tel. 02920 883315. Caerphilly.

**KAWASAKI ER5** long MoT, 20,000 miles, good tyres, good chain sprockets, very good condition, reg 2002, £825 ono Tel. 07936 128746.

**KAWASAKI ER5** 500cc, Nov 1999, blue, engine bars, flyscreen tool-kit, MoT June 2016, 3900 miles, p/x Honda Vision scooter, £1050 Tel. 07546 890419. Kent.

**KAWASAKI GPZ750** Unitrac frame, swingarm, forks, wheels, triple clamps etc, no engine. Tel. 01522 827509. Lincs.

**KAWASAKI KM100** 1980, V reg, 87 miles from new, rusty, breaking for spares, may sell complete, Tel. 01246 827179; 07400 576641. Derbys.

**KAWASAKI S2A 350** 1972, rare two stroke triple, fully restored including full engine rebuild, matching engine and frame numbers, correctly set up & runs beautifully, £6250 ovno Tel. 01280 823322. Bucks.

**KAWASAKI GT750** 1990, red, MoT June 2016, Motad exhaust, engine bars, recent service, very good condition, reliable, £800 Tel. 07762 354400. Liverpool.

**KAWASAKI KE175** red, 1981, MoT, excellent condition, great bike, £2750 Tel. 07816 347623. Leics.

**KAWASAKI Z1 900** 1976, candy blue, lovely condition, long MoT, standard original bike, very well kept 40k miles, lovely 70s classic can only go up in value, good investment, pictures upon request, £7995 Tel. 07762 437521. Essex.

**KAWASAKI Z500** Unitrac, 1984, complete bike for spares or project includes other spares, £450 Tel. 07849 170020. Hampshire.

**KAWASAKI ZZR1100** D7, black, side panniers, top box, new back, tyre some stone chips on front end over all in good condition, £1700 ovno Tel. 07811 980330. Notts.

**MOTO GUZZI V50** being built as cafe racer, re-enamelled, red, needs little work to complete, (mainly electrics), new Avon tyres, £1250 Tel. 01978 842668. Clwyd.

**MYFORD SUPER 7** lathe on makers stand, 3 & 4 jaw chucks, gearbox, vertical milling slide plus other accessories, vgc used regularly, can be seen working, £1200 Tel. 01179 492097. Bristol.

**PUCH MAXI S R** reg, purple, good roadworthy condition with spares and extras, £250 Tel. 01634 725123. Kent.

**REDUCING COLLECTION:** Yamaha RXS 100cc, 1983, blue, restored, £695; Suzuki GSX 250cc, 1984, blue, nearly restored, £795; Yamaha RS 200cc, 1979, blue, nearly restored, £695; Yamaha Dragster cruiser, 650cc, 2003, silver, one owner, mint condition, many chrome extras, £2500; fantastic bargains. Tel. Gordon 01454 324334; 07792 272041. Bristol.

**SANGLAS LAVERDA 750** Twin Yamaha 750 V twin Yamaha 920 or TR1 1000 Honda CD175 no boxes of bits. Tel. 01737 833932. Surrey.

**SQUIRE ST2** single seat side car, red, Universal fittings, removable hood, lockable boot and key, Sensible offers Tel. 01278 425315. Somerset.

**SUZUKI BANDIT 600cc**, 7500 miles, this has to be the best on offer, full service history, all consumables replaced, 1999, realistic offers. Tel. 01547 528465. Powys.

**SUZUKI GS500** 1994, 26k miles, non runner, currently on Sorn, bought last year as a retirement project but now unable to start due to ill health. Tel. 07910 127257. Devon.

**SUZUKI GT185** 1974, good condition ride or restore, £1700 ono Tel. 01453 842632. Gloucestershire.

**SUZUKI GT250** Excellent condition, MoT, must be viewed, £3450 ono; Yamaha Majesty, 250cc scooter, MoT, excellent condition, £1250 ono Tel. 01270 256208. Cheshire.

**SUZUKI SV650** 13,700 miles, superb condition, years MoT, many new parts, must sell, £1600 ono Tel. 01932 821977. Surrey.

**SUZUKI SV650S** K9, excellent condition, 12 months MoT, 9500 mileage, two keys, garaged, beautiful bike selling as need something for 2-up, £2400 ono Tel. 07562 708728. Essex.

**SUZUKI TS250** 1974, red, tax exempt, MoT, show condition, great bike, £3575 Tel. 07816 347623. Leics.

**SUZUKI VX800** 805cc, 1995, V-twin, shaft drive, spares or repair, make good trike project. Tel. 07831 188224. North Wales.

**YAMAHA DIVERSION** 1992, 400cc pair of rear silencers. Tel. Bob 01634 846335 or after 5pm. Kent.

**YAMAHA IT175** 1983, MoT January 2016, average condition for year, £1200 Tel. 07999 884472. West Sussex.

**YAMAHA RD400D** recently restored, new paint decals etc, yellow black front pipes, rechromed Yamaha expansion, £3500. Yamaha YDS7, restored, £2500 needs registering. Tel. 07752 127181; 01250 884382 Perthshire.

**YAMAHA THUNDERACE** 1997, superb original condition, 11,000 miles, fsh datatag, MoT, silver blue, £2150 Tel. 07990 637785. Worcs.

**YAMAHA VIRAGO** 535cc, vgc, well looked after, just had full service, 12 months MoT, Pirelli tyres, 18,000km, full screen, back rest, heated grips, spots, toothbrush cleaned, £2000 Tel. 01766 831173. Gwynedd.

**YAMAHA XJR1300** black/white stripe, one owner, serviced, warranty remaining, excellent condition, April 2014, £6325 ono Tel. 07918 739504. West Midlands.

**YAMAHA XJR1300** April 2014, black/white stripe, one owner, warranty remaining, serviced, excellent condition, £6325 ono Tel. 07918 739504. West Midlands.

**YAMAHA XS1100** 1978, recent MoT, 33k miles, nice runner, £1650 Tel. 01424 425390. East Sussex.

**YAMASAKI YM125** 2012 reg, first new MoT till 2016 August, tidy bike, reason for selling need space in shed, £475 ono Tel. 01872 240206. Cornwall.

## PARTS FOR SALE

**ALLOY MOTORCYCLE PARTS** restored and polished, Heathrow/Surrey area. Tel. Zed 07590 53223. Middx.

**BEOWULF EXHAUSTS** pair, black, s/steel, £120. Nitron full spec rear shock £300, Gilles chain adjusters £80, all to fit Suzuki GSX R1000 K7/8, all in good condition. Tel. 07859 011863. Birmingham.

**BSA A10 GOLDSTAR** etc, gearbox for sale, wanted M20 or earlier gearbox poss, exchange cash either way WHY? Tel. Gareth 07811 271702. Mid Glamorgan.

**DUCATI 900SS** Corca 1978, single seat and tank cover, black and gold, £120 Tel. 01484 682822.

**HONDA 400 (4)** engine unit, less carbs, (1975-77), £225; brake mast cylinder, £25; wipers x 4, £10; centre stand, £25; starter motor, £25; coils, £25; exhaust glands x 4; £10 etc. Tel. 01772 783774. Lancs.

**HONDA 400 F1** 1976, new indicator bracket, tools and box, rear brake, front reservoir and lever, calliper bracket, casings, disc spat, headlight cover, CB750 SOHC, clocks, wiring harness. Tel. 01507 578146. Lincs.

**HONDA BLACKBIRD** rh silencer, off 99 FI model, only been on bike for 1 year, no damage, perfect condition, looks brand new, £150 ono. Tel. 01289 381140 Northumberland.

**HONDA CB160** 1965, large quantity engine parts, crankcases barrel cylinder head gears starter motor and more, call for details, £60 Tel. 01635 579115. Berkshire.

**HONDA CB350S-G** most parts available, would swap for C50, C70, C90 parts or 750-1100cc Honda parts. Tel. 07952 012011. Durham.

**HONDA CB400-4F** 1975, spare parts left over from project build, this bike had the rear pillion foot rests mounted on the swingarm. Tel. Ski 07999 884472. West Sussex.

**HONDA CB450** twin K3, 1971, original parts for sale, tank seat side panels, electrics clocks exhaust, mudguards, etc. Tel. 07792 517466. North Yorkshire.

**HONDA CB500X** 2015 model brand new, Honda box and fitting kit plus brand new pannier boxes and fitting kit, still in cardboard boxes, new cost £700, accept £250 ovno. Tel. 01302 534155. South Yorks.

**HONDA CB650Z** engine took apart, selling as spares, will post. Tel. Craig 07770 987038. Suffolk.

**HONDA CBR750** F2 engine for sale, part stripped, complete engine, needs restoring, only £250 Tel. 07792 517466. Northumberland.

**HONDA CBF1000** Puig windscreen (bigger than standard), + MRA touring windshield (with spoiler) £25 each Tel. 01642 818568. Teesside.

**HONDA CBR** Super Blackbird, blue, righthand side, fairing no cracks, £50 ono Tel. 07977 619562. Derbyshire.

**HONDA CBR 1000RR** Pro-link Special Performance, 1000cc, brand new, never used, Offers over £600 Tel. Richard 07916 328736. Leeds, W Yorks.

**HONDA CBR250R** MC19, 1990, RVF250 front end most parts except motor/wiring. Tel. 07811 698505. Hampshire.

**HONDA CBR600FM** petrol tank, no dints or scratches, £50 ono Tel. 07977 619562. Derbyshire.



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**HONDA CG125 PARTS** seat £20; headlight brackets, £15; battery box, £8; air box and filter £8; side panel, £5; seat latches, £5; exhaust bracket, £4; clocks bracket, £4 or the lot £55. Tel. 07752 443794. Denbighshire.

**HONDA NT700** Deauville, MRA touring with adjustable spoiler, £35. 20mm bar raisers, £10, contact for more info. Tel. 01302 340181. South Yorkshire.

**HONDA VFR1200FA** 2010, pair passengers grab handles, £35 Tel. 07900 371020. Northumberland.

**HONDA VFR800i** fuel tank black, mint £40 also seat surround excellent, £20 Tel. 02920 229030. Glamorgan.

**HONDA XL 250 SPARES** two engines, twin port, 2 cylinder heads, rocker covers, barrel, 4 carbs, lots more, engines, £180 each; collection only Tel. 074340 40520. Lancs.

**HONDA XL250** twin port, garage clearance, briefly two full engines, two cylinder heads, rocker covers, four carbs, lots more, £350 might split. Tel. 07434 040520. Lancs.

**KAWASAKI Z MIRROR** nos part 56001-11-6, £50. Nos part Fuel tap 51023-1023, £75 ono. Indicator nos part 23037-1133, £35. Nos part footrest 34027-1109, £40. Nos parts battery lead, 2061-1162, £25. Nos part indicator 23037-1133, £35. Tel. Steve 01707 692405. Herts.

**KAWASAKI ZX7R** 750cc, 1996, red, full fairing, screen, drop bars, clamps, top yoke, mirrors, headlights, look, frame brace, £495 could separate Tel. 07768 176166. Norfolk.

**MOORE & WRIGHT** 0-1 micrometer assy, new, £30; 0-25 micrometer, £18; hardly used carbide face 12" files for alloy meters, slight rust, 6 of, £30. Tel. 0208 6414238. Surrey.

**MZ TS125** Rolling chassis, inc tank & seat + V5, £100 Tel. 01226 297119. South Yorkshire.

**RD350 YPVS** 31K lots of parts available (not calipers), some parts new, call for details. Tel. Terry 07810 078790. Bucks.

**SCORPION SLIP ON** exhaust carbon for Kawasaki GTR1400, 2007 on, complete as new, no dents, cost £330, £150 ono. Tel. John 07807 176985. North London.

**SUZUKI BANDIT 1200** 2006, Delkevic can/link pipe £75, Givi carrier £60; Haynes Manual £40; buyer collects. Tel. 01993 840943. Oxfordshire.

**SUZUKI RGV250** VM22 front end including forks yokes f/wheel c/w discs, calipers, slight pitting on stations, £200 ono Tel. Chris 07811 698505. Hampshire.

**SUZUKI GN250** seat, new, £50; Benelli ZC fuel tank, £60; Yamaha XJ650 front guard, £30; tailpiece, £10; i/h side panel, £10; Honda CB750 DOHC clocks, £20; Enfield Electra X fuel tank, £35; front guard, £20; rear guard, £20. Tel. 07771 770868. Milton Keynes.

**SUZUKI GS1000** 1000cc brand new, genuine pistons/rings, 1st oversize part 12103-49810-050 / 12140-4900 1-050, cost over £500, accept £200 plus lots gaskets included for free. Tel. Steve 01707 692405. Hertfordshire.

**SUZUKI GS1000** 1000cc, brand new cambox end covers, chrome, part no 11174-49000 X4 still in packets, £60 ono. GS1000 tailpiece toolbox only, £15. Front mudguard, genuine, small crack repairable, no rust, £25. Tel. Steve 01707 692405. Herts.

**SUZUKI GS1000** 1000cc, Motad exhaust only used 26 miles, stored ever since, excellent condition, £150. GS1000 handlebar clamp cover, £15. Genuine exhaust Heatshield part no 14791-49000, £10. BMW R75 fairing + panniers, £75. Tel. Steve 01707 692405. Herts.

**SUZUKI GS650G** Katana spares, tank, engine bars, carbs, rear wheel and disc, seat, £125 the lot Tel. 07874 231738. East Sussex.

**SUZUKI GSXR1000** K6, PCIII, power commander, £65 ono. Hel Braided brake lines as new, £45. Tel. 07951 818730. West Sussex.

**SUZUKI GT250** new, X7 petrol tank red, £200 ovno Tel. 07403 619019 or text anytime. Manchester.

**SUZUKI RG125** fun, two front disks, £30 each; two rear wheels, £30 each. Tel. Phil 01226 297119. South Yorkshire.

**TRIUMPH TRIDENT** Sprint 900, breaking 1995 green pair of wheels, £50 no discs other parts available. Tel. 07789 801540. Wiltshire.

**XS750 ENGINE SPARES** recon crank and rods by SEP with cases and g/box to suit, gasket set, set stainless capheads also one good bottom half with g/box plus transferbox, also starters crankcases carbs in fact a trailer load of spares, £500 the lot. Tel. John 07907 868151. Cornwall.

**YAMAHA FJR1300** parts, rear rack, footrest hanger, rear light, shock, rear light and other bits. Tel. Mark 07815 084533. Cheshire.

**YAMAHA OBLONG MIRRORS** fair condition, black finish i/h and r/hand (used on XJ650), £5 + £5 p&p. Tel. 01803 607265. Torquay.

**YAMAHA RD** Aircooled and LC 4L0 and 4L1 spares from garage clearance, please call or text for details, parts can be posted within UK. Tel. 07540 784259. Gloucestershire.

**YAMAHA XJ650** Motad 4 into pipes, brand new, also fits XJ750, £150 no offers, also steel Galv bike safe, suit same. Tel. 01495 313881. South Wales.

**YAMAHA XJ900S** Diversion Haynes Manuals, £10. Givi monolock rack with plate & arms, all fixings, excellent condition, only 12 months old, £70 ono. Tel. 07944 514260 or 01785 215394. Staffs.

**YAMAHA BT1100 BULLDOG** V metal front mudguard complete with brackets offers. Tel. 07770 713864; 01902 791570. West Midlands.

## WANTED

**ANYONE KNOW WHERE** black Suzuki GS1000E, reg WJO 424T, old motorcycle of mine now lives? Tel. 07802 426542. Cornwall.

**APRILIA FACTORY PARTS** and service information from the 80s, 90s and 00s. Also interested in original specialist service tooling, Tel. Simon 07825 569369. Northamptonshire.

**BENELLI 750 SEI** wanted by private buyer, in good standard condition and road running order. Tel. 01603 873143. Norwich.

**BMW SPARES** R565, R75, R80 32mm Bing carbs, front mudguard, good silencers, Tel. Simon 07788 442155. Avon.

**BSA BANTAM 175** D14 engine or flywheel and conrod must have a good big end, either must be in nice condition. Tel. 01424 845651. Bexhill on Sea.

**CB900F FRAME** wanted must have log book, will consider partial bike, Yorks/Lancs areas Tel. 07745 645013. South Yorkshire.

**CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE** wanted any make or size, anything considered and in any condition. Tel. 07548 801403. Notts.

**EXHAUST SYSTEM OR HEADERS** for 1991 Honda VFR750FM, anything considered & will collect. Tel. 01329 317588. Hampshire.

**HARLEY SUNDOWNER** solo seat to fit a 2002 Dyna Glide, p/no 51933-01, fits 96/03 dynas. Tel. 01457 765036. Cheshire.

**HONDA C95** 150cc, left hand exhaust pipe wanted, must have good unpitted chrome, would purchase a pair if available (not Taiwan pattern parts as bends are poor) Tel. 07870 513474. Bristol.

**HONDA CB400N** or CX500 front brake calipers (pair) wanted, also splitter pipe, CB250RS engine bars and luggage rack (Rickman), required Tel. 07717 075814. West Yorkshire.

**HONDA CB900F** frame, spares or project bike must have log book, Yorks/Lancs areas. Tel. 7745645013. South Yorkshire.

**HONDA CD175A** Sloper, centre stand. Tel. 01978 290123. Clwyd.

**HONDA CD175A** front brake cable and clutch cable. Tel. 01978 290123. Clwyd.

**HONDA CITY FLY** 125cc wanted, must be excellent condition, low miles if possible, please ring or text with details. Tel. 07753 247682. Newcastle Upon Tyne.

**HONDA VT250** useable exhaust wanted for resto project, also spares, will buy complete bike if cheap. Tel. 01625 576013. Cheshire.

**HONDA CB900F** wanted, parts bike or frame with V5, Tel. 07745 645013. South Yorkshire.

**KAWASAKI ELIMINATOR** wanted any spares including engine, gearbox etc. Tel. 01142 455780. Sheffield.

**KAWASAKI KE175D FRAME** ideally with log book/V5, but at least with frame no in tact. Tel. Mark 07557 996817. Leics.

**KAWASAKI KH250** exhausts, to finish project. Tel. 07801 190446. Durham.

**LOOKING FOR A BIKE** model I had years ago. Honda XL250/XL500, Suzuki TS250ER, or similar, to regain my mouth, runner or project. Have cash, will travel. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbys.

**LOOKING FOR** RG500 to restore back to its former glory, if you have a barn or garage find or crash damaged bike then please contact me. Tel. 07944 404152. Worcestershire.

**MOTO GUZZI** Le Mans Mk II, 1978 onwards, must be 100% Tel. 01642 484073 after 6pm. Cleveland.

**SILENCERS WANTED** for 1992 Yamaha 400cc Diversion, Tel. Bob 07634 846335 after 5pm. Chatham.

**SUZUKI AP50** spares wanted bike or parts exhaust pipe and peddal gear, Tel. Dave 07752 137780; 01612 828728. Cheshire.

**SUZUKI GS1100G** 1982, shaft drive, good condition engine or bottom end required for bike rebuild, complete bike considered, cash waiting. Tel. Colin 01935 478050. Somerset.

**SUZUKI GS650G** Katana seat cover or seat OE UK spec orange red & black, must be in good condition, no rips etc, Tel. 07738 444077. Bedfordshire.

**SUZUKI GT50A** a used full electronic ignition set wanted. Tel. Paul 01246 456018. Derbyshire.

**SUZUKI GT750** 1974, wanted i/h exhaust, must be good chrome, no dents. Tel. 07833 582342. Kent.

**SUZUKI RE5M** rotary, globe type turn signals/indicators wanted, please phone if you have some for sale! Tel. Allan 07846 525663. Somerset.

**WANTED FOR** 1977 Kawasaki KZ750 B2 twin, fully working & in vgc a starter motor. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

**WANTED FOR** Honda CG125 1998/200 rubber air connector to carburettor, reply by e-mail to [boast.john@orange.fr](mailto:boast.john@orange.fr)

**YAMAHA RD350YPVS** 31k, 1983, petrol tank wanted. Tel. 01472 316988. Lincs.

**YAMAHA XJ600** Diversion complete or part bike wanted for project. Tel. 07502 085096. Lincs.

**YAMAHA XS650/XS400/TR1** OR SR500 wanted, runner or project, have cash, will travel. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbys.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**ALPINESTAR DRYSTAR** Pants, 24" waist, new unused, £80. Tel. 07815 606658. Merseyside.

**20 LITRES DRUM** 'Optima' racing 2/stroke oil, Specs, JASO, FD. ISO, EGD. API, TC, situated two miles from Donington Park, £100 ovno, buyer collects Tel. 07979 558308. Derbyshire.

**ABBA STAND** for use with m/cycle, not fitted with centre set and, enables work carried out where only side stand fitted, easily fitted, £50 Tel. 02920 561669. S Glam.

**BELL HELMET** open-face, matt black, as new, only worn twice, c/w 'Bell' bag, £120 ono Tel. 01209 214457. Cornwall.

**CLASSIC SUZUKI CIGARETTE** type cards mounted in picture frame: Kettle, Super 6, T500, GS750, GT550, GT750, RE5, vgc, £25 p&p Tel. 01803 607265; 01364 653515. Torquay.

**FACTORY SUZUKI** service manual, good condition, £25 ono plus postage Tel. . Lancs.

**HARLEY DAVIDSON BACKREST** to fit 2006 Streetbob, good condition, £80; Harley Davidson clutch cable for Streetbob, as new, £75; Harley Davidson bike jacket, £50; ladies black bike jacket, £50; Clutchmaster, will fit VTR 1000 Bandit 1200 and other bikes, £40. Tel. 07790 9344835. Staffs.

**HAYNES MANUAL** Suzuki GSXR750 & GSXR1100 and Katana GSX600F, GSX750F & GSX1100F (all air/oil-cooled fours) 1985-1993, very good condition, £8+ £2 UK p&p. Tel. John 07817 562421; 01132 603057. Leeds.

**HONDA CBR1100** Super Blackbird bike jacket with detachable inner size M, excellent condition, £60. Riossi black/yellow adjustable gloves, size S, £10. Thinsulate black gloves, XS, £5. Black/yellow/white Spada waterproof oversuit 33, brand new, never been worn, size S, £30. Tel. 07855 420249. Manchester.

**HONDA VFR1200FA** 2010, Baglux tank cover, black + red, as new, £55 ono Tel. 07900 371020. Northumberland.

**KAWASAKI ZZR600** original owners manual, from a 1995 model, ZX600-E11, £10. Tel. 07505 464654. West Midlands.

**MAGAZINES:** Practical Sportsbike, issues 1-50 inclusive, good condition, £100 Tel. 07899 770367. Devon.

**RST TEXTILE JACKET** mens, size small, never worn blue/black, £35 ono buyer collects. £35 ono buyer collects Tel. 07704 804893. Buckinghamshire.

**SAMMY MILLER** 'The Will to Win' by Jeff Clew, signed, £55. Also Guinness Facts & Feats M/Cycling signed Sammy & Mick Andrews, £20. Tel. 07434 072785. Lancs.





# Ignition sanity check

Points and condensers; you're unlikely to be going far without them says **Scoop**.



**M**any of the bikes that feature in **CMM** still run with the proven points and coil ignition system.

Aftermarket electronic ignitions certainly have their place and with many newer examples embracing the latest microchip technologies you'd be daft not to use them on classics that are ridden regularly, far and hard: but what about restos that may only see occasional use? Do they warrant an aftermarket kit? And even if they do is such a set-up commercially available? If the answers to the last two questions are no and no then you need to be on your game fettling what you have and not wondering why no one makes a kit for your bike.

All of which brings us back to Project Stinger in a roundabout way; no one makes an electronic kit for them so I need to optimise what I have. What follows is a comprehensive but by no means exhaustive overview of the foibles of points-based ignition and what to look out



**1/** A half-moon key accurately locates vital rotating masses. If it has a few burrs it can be filed back to fit but if it's badly worn it'll need replacing. A gentle tap should be all that's needed to locate it.

for. Yes the Stinger is atypical of many engine layouts, agreed it runs rotor and stator arse about face compared with some and the way the low-tension side is set up is a little quirky but the basic ground rules still apply.

Worth reinforcing here is that these

ignition systems also run one or more condensers and when they fail they can present some very odd running faults that can be hard to trace. If the bike's ignition system is a total unknown then it makes sense to renew as much as we can and start with a clean sheet. ➔



**Simple solutions:** Don't use plumber's flux on ignitions. Corrosion ensues!



**2/** The rotor should be an easy, snug, fit on to the crank end with no slop between it and either the key or the taper. If there's movement timing may be difficult to set and vibration is inevitable. **3/** On the Stinger the points cam sits in a recess on the end of the rotor. Note the locating peg, which needs to fit snugly into the slot in the rotor. **4/** The correct bolt and washer is fitted and tightened. The bolt is often a special fitting in terms of length and smooth shank. The washer(s) may be split or dished. Both washers and bolt need to be the correct items.



**5/** Points cams can be subject to extreme wear especially there's never been any lubrication. Given that spares are often hard to find or worse than the one you have this one will have to do for now. **6/** It's almost a given that rough project bikes will come with knackered points. Here I'm checking that the replacement sets are physically the same as the originals. Worth remembering is that points are often handed left and right. **7/** The fixing screws are a cross/slot head combo. Use the correct/appropriate driver. Be prepared to call in the artillery if the screw is seized but proceed with extreme caution.

## A pointless exercise

Years ago bike and car shops used to sell something called a points file. Harking back to the days of magnetos the theory was that any extraneous pips on the faces of the points could be filed off and you'd be good to go without shelling out for a new set. All fine and dandy for very minor damage but the pips you'd be removing had to come from somewhere. As Isaac Newton promulgated

"matter is neither created nor destroyed". The spattering comes from the opposite points face and is partially wear related, partially owing to condenser issues. Look at picture 14 and ponder how anyone is genuinely supposed to compensate for this much missing points face. The correct response reads... dear sir please rush me some new points for my antique Japanese motorcycle!





## Tapers, keys and keyways

It's a popular misconception that half-moon and Woodruff keys are the device that holds the rotor to the taper. The reality is that the key/keyway combination simply acts as a locating or positioning device. If either male or female sides of the taper are marked or corroded it's possible to recover one or both by lapping the pair together with some fine valve grinding paste.

Badly damaged surfaces will need expert input. Damaged keyways on shafts can be recut by a specialist and if the rotor's female keyway is okay it's perfectly acceptable to use a stepped two width key. What's not possible is the use of shim plate, plastic metal or similar levels of bodgery as it'll be impossible to get the two components concentric. With badly grooved tapers some success has been achieved with medium hold auto-industrial adhesives but the results can be variable. But if you need to remove the rotor later you may well have problems.

The holding capabilities of a good, true, taper are truly immense. Back in the veteran period companies such as Zenith used tapers on the big end-to-flywheel interface of their awesome V-twins. Apparently the joints were lapped in by hand then cleaned of any grinding paste. Before final assembly the fitter would add a good dollop of spit in order to start a mild corrosion between the two parts and wind up the securing nut. Loctite hadn't been invented back then but rust had!



**8/** Loosen small bolts with the correct spanner, no pliers. A 1/4in drive socket set and miniature spanner kit make for good working practice. Note the position of the insulating washers; don't lose/omit them or the bike probably won't even run.



**9/** Condensers can be handed too but their function isn't. If push comes to shove it's possible to remove the existing bracket and fabricate one to suit. It's the capacitive value and physical size that dictates usability. **10/** Typical of period Suzukis the condenser cable is soldered to the loom. Use a soldering iron to sweat the joint apart and reconnect using electrical solder. NEVER use plumbing flux on ignition systems; it causes rampant corrosion.

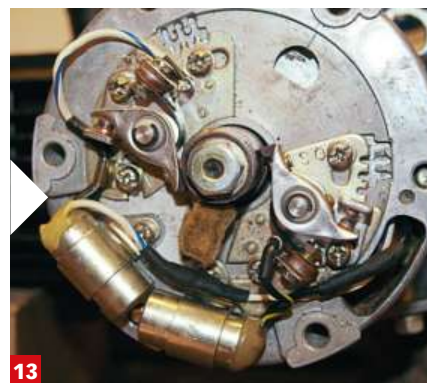


So there's a snapshot of what makes up a period crank-mounted ignition system. If you have a four-stroke with points running off the cam the same logic and modus operandi still apply; it's just that the location and layouts will look different. The eagle-eyed will notice I've not oiled the felt pad on the points cam. It's a moot point as to whether this system actually works.

The theory is that capillary action should drag oil from the pad on to the cam and prevent both it and the heel of the points wearing. I'm yet to be convinced that light machine oil can withstand the vagaries of rapid acceleration and deceleration from zero to eight grand and back again. Until then I shall be adding a very gentle smear of grease and removing the felt pad. **cmm**



**11/** Make sure aftermarket parts have the correct colour wiring and oversleeving where appropriate. If not make notes for next time in a manual and add a layer of insulation at key areas. **12/** The protective sleeving to the original condenser wires was partially chafed. An extra layer of cloth loom tape over the new heat shrink should add additional protection. **13/** Stator back in place to retain the rotor's magnetism: all that's left is to install the former in the outer engine cover and time the engine.





# Next month

**ISLAND LIFE:** Mark Forsyth rides around the Isle of Man during the Classic TT on an R1.

**THE FULL SP:** Steve Cooper rides John Woods' delightful Yamaha FZR400RR SP.

**QUICK SPIN:** Bertie Simmonds on the Yamaha FZS600 Fazer.

**KAWASAKI W1:** Scoop on the bike that set up Kawasaki.

**READER'S SPECIAL:** John Purnell and his lovely Moto Guzzi Le Mans Mk.3.

## PLUS!

**WORKSHOP:** Chassis work begins on the Honda SS125, engine build tips revealed and more wiring issues for Mark Haycock and his Yamaha TX500.

**NOVEMBER PROJECT BIKES:** Steve Parrish returns with his Yamaha FZ750 Superstocker, Steve Cooper shows us his Yamaha RD350 and Project Rickuki café racer while the Suzuki apprentices sort the brakes on their 1990 Suzuki GSX-R1100L.

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The idiot editor reserves the right to change his mind as to content at any given time. Right?





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# Honda CB600F Hornet

## SPECIFICATION

**HONDA**  
**CB600F**  
*Hornet*

### MODEL

CB600F Hornet, CB600FS (faired)

### PRICE NEW

£4995 (1998) £4277 (1999 – post parallel import price) £5004 (FS)

### YEARS AVAILABLE

1998-2003

### MAJOR CHANGES

Colour changes. Late 1999 moved to 17in front. Crossover front brake pipe changes from rubber to braided, different pads from 2000.

### COST

Starts at £1000 to £2800 for later bikes.

### VERDICT

A great bike: buy the right one and you're sure to get your money back!

**FOR:** Amazing build quality, holds value well, good-looking, handles well enough.

**AGAINST:** Fuel range, practicality, some dodgy modifieds and ex-racers out there.

**E**very now and again a manufacturer will come up with a bike that makes the other manufacturers sit up and take notice. Then they make their own version.

No, the Honda CB600F Hornet isn't such a machine, but it was Honda's answer to the successful Suzuki GSX600F Bandit which was selling by the boat-load 20 years ago. Both Yamaha and Honda saw the way the sales were going and decided to get in on the act. Yamaha came up with the FZS600 Fazer and Honda the CB600F Hornet in 1998.

In typical naked middleweight stylee the Hornet featured a detuned motor stolen from a CBR600F nabbed wheels from the FireBlade (that's a 16in front) and nicked styling from the Jap market-only 250 Hornet. It was clearly a better bike than the Suzuki Bandit, but it was around £1000 more to buy when new and many thought the Fazer was a bit better bike and more practical. Build quality was good, but there were frustrations. Firstly the Blade wheels: the 180 rear section looked good, but meant that the 16in front offered limited tyre options – more so today. Also the fuel range (like the VTR) wasn't great if you pushed it hard. It only had a 16-litre tank, two litres down on the Fazer and six litres down on the 2000 model Fazer. The Hornet only got an extra litre in 2003.

Braking was taken care of by CBR600F calipers, which were starting to feel a little dated by this time (the Fazer had the calipers from the R1!). At the time, I opted for the Yamaha when buying my first four-stroke, as it had a grunter motor and in my eyes it was better looking and more practical too. What many owners say is that



## ASK ANDY

Andy Bolas is one of the younger chaps from the VJMC

– and it shows. He's always sniffing out the future classics that we should be hoarding. This month: Honda's 600cc Hornet.

the Hornet could have been better if they had left the CBR600F motor as it was rather than de-tuning it with smaller 34mm Keihin carbs.

In late 1999 Honda fitted a 17in front wheel for the CB600F-Y version and also released the CB600F-S which was a half-faired version which was initially priced around £400 more than the naked bike but wasn't as pretty. For a time there was a race class – The Hornet Cup – and bikes were allowed only minor modifications to suspension, can and a 5% tolerance on the main jet, so there are some ex race machines out there. Also, the Hornet seemed to capture the imagination of specials builders out there too.

The usual Honda stuff goes wrong: regulator rectifiers, camchain tensioners and some owners complain of clunky gearboxes. The Hornet does seem to have stood the test of time and there's a good owners' club too. There are lots of nice, original machines out there for strong money. **cmm**





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*As featured in the February 2010 issue of Classic Motorcycle Mechanics*



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# Kawasaki ZRX1100/1200

## SPECIFICATION

### KAWAZAKI ZRX 1100/1200

#### PRICE NEW

£7545 (1997, 1100)  
£6681 (2006, 1200)

#### YEARS AVAILABLE

1997-2000 (1100)  
2001-2006 (1200)

#### MAJOR CHANGES

1052cc motor went to 1164cc in 2001. Colour changes through all models.

#### COST

Starts at £1500 to £5000 for later bikes.

#### VERDICT

The best-looking modern classic retro bar none.

**FOR:** Looks, presence, tune-ability.

**AGAINST:** Brakes can be poor, prices very strong!

**M**aybe other retro-look bikes handled better, or went faster, or were more 'true' to the originals, but nothing looked as good as the ZRX1100.

Kawasaki did retro first and did it well with the Zephyr range in the early 1990s, in a series of 550, 750 and 1100 air-cooled offerings, but the ZRX range was moving things on a little. Three versions saw light of day: a naked, round-headlight 'N' version, a half-faired 'S' which was launched in 2001 and the one we want to talk about – the ZRX1100R, which was launched in 1997.

All models used the water-cooled 1052cc motor from the ZZ-R1100, detuned to around 100bhp, placed in a tubular frame, with a braced swingarm and twin Kayaba piggyback reservoir shocks. The coup de grace for the R was the adoption of a small, rectangular bikini fairing, which aped the Eddie Lawson Replicas of the early 1980s. Originally launched in a silver or purple, the ZRX1100R looked good, but when it adopted an ELR-esque green with stripes, it suddenly really looked the part and things went mad from there. Other old Zed-stylee colours were silver with black stripes and a Firecracker red with blue and silver stripes. For us retro-mad riders in the late 1990s, it was manna from heaven. For 2001 the engine capacity went up to 1164cc and claimed 120bhp just prior to the ZZ-R1200 coming out.

Other manufacturers got on board. Okay, Yamaha was already there with the air-cooled XJR1200 of 1995, which also morphed into a 1300 version. Suzuki came along later with the wibbly-wobbly handling GSX1400 (and no GS-style nose-cone, shame) and Honda with the CB1000 and then CB1300s. But none of them could really touch the ZRX for character. Problems on them were solid. On the one I had, the only

## BERTIE'S BLATHER



Our own Bertie is a bit of a bike buying/selling addict. He's had more than 10 bikes in the last five years, with signs there are more to come. And go!

issue was with the age-old issues of finish on the motor and various hangers. Brakes (six-pot Tokicos) needed looking after too, and downpipes soon lost colour or began to rust.

Specials builders love these bikes. Sharing the ZZ-R engine meant you could put the original cams back in and with other changes liberate 150bhp. The chassis tarted up with better brakes, pukka ELR paint and extended swingarms and the like. This popularity is reflected in owners clubs on both sides of the pond – not unnaturally the Americans love 'em – and strong residuals.

Prices tentatively start at £1500. We've seen good, solid 1100s in our own ads for £1800 – while eBay and the like sees these bikes start around £2000-£2500. We've also seen low-mile, late model (03-06) 1200Rs go for up to five grand! No-wonder Z-Power's Dave Marsden tucked away one of the last 1200Rs in the UK.

We've yet to hear of someone buying the less-loved (but almost identical) S and converting one to look like an R, but it must be possible? Sadly, the new ZRX never came to the UK. **cmm**



## Hizzy and the White Charger

PIC: MORTONS ARCHIVE

Steve Hislop was a legend. As fast as anyone on his day, if he'd had the breaks he surely would have been a world champion. Robert Steven Hislop (his dad Sandy made a mistake when registering the birth) and his younger brother Garry (sadly later killed racing) was a legend in road racing with 11 TT wins and a multiple British champion on short circuits. His most memorable feat was taking the ABUS-backed Norton rotary to a win in the 1992 Senior TT victory. In his autobiography, *HIZZY*, Steve recalled: "I actually laughed when Norton's team boss Barry Symmonds asked me

to ride the bike at the TT. I thought 'you must be joking, that will never last one lap of the Isle of Man'. But it did and he won the race from Carl Fogarty's Loctite Yamaha by four seconds. Today this amazing machine is part of the National Motorcycle Museum and is regularly seen at the Isle of Man TT Classic races. Check out their new website at: [www.nationalmotorcyclemuseum.co.uk](http://www.nationalmotorcyclemuseum.co.uk)

● If you want to check out the amazing shots in Morton's Archive then go to: [www.mortonsarchive.com](http://www.mortonsarchive.com) **cm**





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